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Protesting Unfair Treatment

Union Calls on Lawyers to Clog Military Courts

Representative Palestinian lawyers decided March 26 to escalate their protest in response to the heavy sentences being levied in West Bank military courts. The Arab Lawyers Union, in a meeting held at the National Hotel in Jerusalem, called on their members to stop up the military courts until Israeli authorities respond positively to their demands for dealing with their clients in a more professional manner. The lawyers' protest includes not entering any guilty pleas and refusing to accept prisoners' testimonies until after conducting a mini-trial to discuss the admissibility of prisoners' confessions.

In another meeting February 22, the lawyers condemned the heavy sentences which Israeli military courts have been serving against demonstrators and other protesters. Several people, including a 14-year-old boy, were sentenced to between five and eight-years each for Molotov cocktail attacks. 'Ahed al-Issa, 14, from Dheisheh refugee camp near Bethlehem, was sentenced to five years in jail January 30 after he was convicted of throwing a Molotov cocktail at an Israeli bus. Several other youths from Halhoul were given seven to eight years each on similar charges. The lawyers said that a special committee was set up to make a survey of recent court sentences.

Lawyers also attacked the Israeli military court system and said that it has fallen under Israeli settler pressure. One lawyer said that this proves that military courts are an instrument in the hands of the military authorities. They also said the conditions which Palestinian detainees are held under are inhuman. Palestinian prisoners are not allowed during the first 18 days of detention to see their lawyers. One lawyer said that only after prisoners give written confessions or when the interrogators exhaust all means to obtain confessions are lawyers given access to their clients. The lawyer explained that this process can, and occasionally does, take months. The lawyers also demanded that they be allowed to be with their clients during questioning.

Among other things, the lawyers discussed the possibility of demanding that parole regulations also apply to Palestinian political prisoners.

Before ending the meeting, the lawyers agreed to hold further meetings and to inform other lawyers of steps to force an improvement in prison conditions.

The care with which the Palestinians tend their land reflects its importance to their lives and well-being. Land, to the Palestinians, is their life blood: roots, livelihood, fulfillment, and pride. On this day, we honour the Palestinians' commitment to and unceasing toil for the land.

Um al-Fahm Gets Municipal Status

The Israeli Interior Ministry approved March 24 an application by the Um al-Fahm local council for township status. The application was approved almost nine years after first being filed with the Israeli ministry.

The Triangle village's change of status is sure to triple the amount of government-allocated funds and will also provide Um al-Fahm's 20,000 Arab residents with services and programmes they would not otherwise receive. Only two out of the 22 other Arab communities inside the "green line" have township status: Nazareth and Shafa 'Amr.

The Um al-Fahm local council, now headed by Hashem Mahamid who is a memebr of the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality (DFPE), had applied for the change of status immediately after taking office in 1976. But not until last December did the Israeli government "give the application serious consideration," DFPE sources told *Al Fajr*. In a meeting last December between Israeli Minister without Portfolio Ezer Weizman and local council members, Weizman promised to establish a ministerial committee to study the council's demand. The committee then recommended the change to the Interior Ministry, which announced its approval March 24. Um al-Fahm will officially become a city next September.

Mahamid told *Al Fajr* that although the change of status will help his council implement much-needed projects, "It is only one step in our fight to improve living conditions for the 20,000 residents and to lower the unemployment rate in Um al-Fahm." The village's umemployment is estimated at 4000, Mahamid said. He predicted a "long struggle" for Um al-Fahm with the Israeli government to obtain treatment equal to that of Jewish communities. Last year's budget for Um al-Fahm was only IS600 million, half that of her predominantly Jewish neighbour Pardes Hanna. Pardes Hanna has a population of only 10,000.

Um al-Fahm's small budget has prevented the local council from providing necessary services for its residents. Open sewage pipes run through the town, causing severe health problems. The council has not had the money to complete the sewage system it initiated two years ago. They have also been unable to fund the construction of new roads and the rebuilding of damaged structures throughout the village.

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Kalandia Youth Wounded

Seventeen-year-old Mir'i Salah, a resident of Kalandia refugee camp, was shot in the knee March 24 when Israeli troops opened fire at youths for allegedly hurling stones at passing Israeli vehicles.

Israel Radio reported that Salah, a former political detainee at al-Fara'a prison camp in Nablus, was among a small group of youths who were throwing stones at Israeli vehicles on the Ramallah-Jerusalem highway. When Israeli army units arrived at the scene to search for the stone-throwers, they too were received with a barrage of stones, the radio said.

A woman who happened to be travelling on the same road at the time of the incident told *Al Fajr* that she saw some youths throw stones at an Israeli settler bus. The bus stopped and several settlers carrying machine guns got off and started firing on an Arab school bus near the entrance of the camp. "At least a half-dozen bullets were directed at the school bus," the eyewitness said. The settlers then held traffic up for 15 minutes until the Israeli army arrived and chased youths into the camp, shooting in pursuit. Mir'i was shot during the chase.

Mir'i was taken to Ramallah Hospital, where he underwent surgery to remove a bullet from his left leg. He was reported to be in stable condition following surgery.

Israel Radio had earlier reported that stones were hurled at an Egged bus, smashing its windshield, as it drove near the camp. Last year, the military used cement and barbed wire to close several entrances of the camp that open onto the Ramallah-Jerusalem highway to prevent attacks on Israeli vehicles.

In another development, Israel TV reported March 24 that a Molotov cocktail was thrown at an Israeli army patrol in the Tulkarm refugee camp the same day. There were no reports of injuries or damages. The Israeli army later combed the area, but no arrests were reported.

Another Molotov was thrown at the entrance of al-Fara'a prison camp between Nablus and Jenin. Soldiers detained one person for questioning.

Former main entrance to Kalandia refugee camp on the Jerusalem-Ramallah road.

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Mourners in Sidon bury one person killed by the Israeli army in south Lebanon. Thirteen persons killed in Houmin al-Tahta village were buried a few days earlier in a common grave./AFP photo

Rabin Threatens "Scorched Earth" in Lebanon

The Israeli army, while in the midst of withdrawal from Lebanon, continues to use brute force to quell the rising Lebanese resistance in the south. In Israel, military and political leaders threaten to continue their actions as long as resistance attacks occur.

While Israeli Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Prime *Minister Shimon Peres predicted* the final stage of the Israeli withdrawal would be completed by late May or early June, Israeli spokespersons were busy this week trying to calm the flared tempers of CBS officials angry at the Israeli killing of the news company's TV sound and cameramen in south Lebanon (see separate story). The two CBS employees were killed while filming an Israeli search-and-destroy operation March 21 in Lebanese areas the army had previously withdrawn from south of Sidon. In the Israeli manoeuvre, 21 Lebanese were killed, seven injured, tens arrested, and 11 homes destroyed. The Israeli army's action was reported to have been organised from three villages — Kfar Malki, Jamin Tahta and Ja'abeh — and to have brought units of the Israeli army within 12 kilometres of Sidon.

After the Israeli army again withdrew from those areas, army units continued search-and-combing operations in various south Lebanese villages. Voice of Lebanon Radio reported March 26 that Israeli artillery from Beaufort Castle randomly shelled Nabatiyeh and surrounding villages. The radio report said that Israeli forces refused to allow ambulances or Red Cross vehicles to enter the area under attack. The Israeli attacks followed continued Lebanese resistance aimed at Israeli soldiers and the Israeli-supported South Lebanon Army (SLA).

Lebanese sources calculated that at least 10 different operations were carried out against Israeli forces within a 24-hour period March 26. The Israeli army spokeperson reported only four attacks on their forces near Tyre, Bidias, the Tyre port, and Shabriha. Other attacks and bombings occurred near al-Bas, Bazoriya, al-Qiliyaha, and Deir Qanoun.

In Israel, the political debate over the Lebanese invasion has taken up front pages of the country's major newspapers. Israeli politicians debate the wisdom of maintaining a buffer zone, the success of the "iron fist" policy, and the broader subject of the Lebanon war itself (see page 6).

Despite the general consensus at present among Israeli politicians on the necessity of a withdrawal from Lebanon, Likud cabinet members are still clinging to the idea of keeping token presence in a buffer zone just north of the international border. Articles in the press and statements by army officers have indicated their belief that the SLA would probably fall apart immediately after an Israeli withdrawal and could not be counted on to stop any future guerrilla attacks. Even Defence Minister Rabin has, for the first time, announced a readiness on the part of the Israelis to allow Lebanese who have been cooperating with the Israeli army to reside permanently in Israel.

The "iron fist" policy, advocated during the past few months, appears now to have been replaced by an even more brutal policy to be put in force by the Israeli army after their departure from Lebanon. Defence Minister Rabin has been quoted over the past few days as advocating a "scorched earth" policy against any Lebanese area that initiates attacks against Israel. Rabin said in the security and foreign affairs committee meeting March 26 that Israel will attack any village using ground, air, and naval units if Lebanese guerrillas attack Israel after the withdrawal. *The Jerusalem Post* reported March 27 that Rabin told the committee that "it must be made clear to the Shi'ites that their lives will not be worth living if they refuse to let Israel live in peace."

MK Yossi Sarid (CRM), also a member of the committee, called Rabin's "scorched earth" policy the "hysterical declarations of a man under pressure." Sarid said that such a policy has failed every time it has been tried and that Likud's support of Rabin's policies is similar to the backing given earlier to Ariel Sharon which led Israel into the current catastrophe.

On the subject of the war itself, Rabin told a BBC correspondent that the security situation in Lebanon today is worse than it was prior to the invasion of Lebanon. Israeli commander of the northern region General Ori Orr criticised some of the war's objectives. He was quoted in the Hebrew daily *HaAretz* as saying that "Israel had not foreseen the hostility of the Shi'ites." He said, "Israel should not have gone to war with Lebanon to get rid of the Syrian presence there."

Itzhak Rabin

Controversy Erupts

Army Kills 2 Newsmen in S. Lebanon

The killing March 20 of two Lebanese employees of the US television network CBS near the south Lebanon village of Kfar Malki at the hands of Israeli soldiers set off a heated dispute between CBS and the Israeli government.

CBS News President Edward Joyce termed the killing "deliberate" and called for an investigation into the incident, which resulted in the death of cameraman Tawfiq Ghazawi and soundman Bahij Metni. CBS Vice-President Ernest Leiser was dispatched to Israel for this purpose. The American network also decided to cancel a week-long morning programme on Israel scheduled to be aired from Jerusalem during Easter week.

The Jerusalem Post quoted "senior government sources" March 25 as saying that the CBS request for an inquiry will be rejected. Israel alleges that the Israeli tank was justified in firing three shells at the CBS car because there were "armed guerrillas" in it.

Eyewitnesses at the scene denied the Israeli allegation and said it was clear that there were no armed men anywhere near the press members. French Radio correspondent Alain Menargues said, "The tank fired three shells to kill when it was clear no one was armed." The French journalists reported that the journalists were only 500 metres away from the tank in cars clearly displaying signs identifying them as press. They said the Israeli tank fired the first shell, killing the two CBS crew members and maiming their Lebanese driver. A second shell then destroyed the CBS car. The third shell went astray. Israeli military officers insisted that soldiers manning the tank were not able to see the signs because they were 2500 meters away.

Leiser met Israeli officials during his stay in Israel and travelled to south Lebanon by helicopter at Prime Minister Peres' insistence. He was not allowed to meet with the tank crew that killed the CBS men but he did meet army officers in south Lebanon. Leiser also met with Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres March 26, after which he seemed to accept the Israeli version of the incident. He told reporters following the meeting, "I now believe, even without complete information, that there was certainly not a deliberate attempt to fire tank guns against our camera crew." Leiser did not deny that the action is still considered "an excessive use of force." He also confirmed that the cancelled Easter programme from Jerusalem will not be aired.

Ernest Leiser

UNRWA Keeps Staff in Lebanon

Olof Rydbeck, the commissioner-general of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), said March 27 that UNRWA is maintaining its international staff in Lebanon, despite media reports to the contrary.

"UNRWA is keeping six international staff based in Beirut and three in Tyre, south Lebanon," Rydbeck said. "The error may have occurred because the agency's British staff are being moved out at the request of the British Embassy in Beirut. UNRWA is certainly not contemplating closing its offices or its operations in Lebanon," Rydbeck said.

Three Britons have been kidnapped in Lebanon recently, including UNRWA public information consultant Alec Collett. This is believed to have contributed to the British Embassy's request.

The UNRWA international staff remaining in Lebanon include citizens of Austria, Ireland, Norway, and Sweden. They supervise some 2300 local employees who run schools, clinics, and welfare services for 256,000 Palestine refugees in Lebanon.

Um al Fahm

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The village's inability to pay for these projects sparked their invitation to various organisations and concerned groups to hold a voluntary work camp next month to implement a few small projects in the town. The camp, to be held April 7 for four days, will aid residents in sweeping inner roads, building fences around farm lands, constructing a local school, and initiating expansion of a public park.

5 West Bank Judges Arrested for Corruption Scandal

Two Israeli-appointed judges from the Nablus district civil court were arrested March 23 on charges of accepting bribes. Three other judges, including the highest Israeli appointee in the West Bank legal system, the president of the Ramallah-based Court of Appeals, were arrested two weeks ago on similar charges.

Nablus Judges Zuhair al-Bishtawi and Mahmoud Abu Khadir are reportedly being interrogated. Many local residents have reportedly asked that cases peviously heard by the five judges be retried.

Three of the five judges in the West Bank Court of Appeals, Judges Ghaleb al-Haj Mahmoud, president, and members Zakaria Abdeen and Sa'id Abu Swai, were remanded for one week March 24 after two of them admitted charges. The three are reportedly being held in the Israeli government headquarters in East Jerusalem. Israeli authorities immediately appointed three other judges to replace them.

According to Israeli daily *Hadashot* March 25, Judge Mahmoud is accused of involvement in the largest of the bribe scandals. The paper said that the head of the Rjoub family in Dura, Hebron reported that the family paid a total of JD12,000 in bribes to the judge. The tabloid paper did not specify what services the judge rendered in return. It also alleged that other Hebron area figures, including head of the Hebron district court Samir Ja'abari and the prosecuting attorney Ahmad Shahin, are involved in payoffs. Area lawyers have also been questioned about their relationship to the case.

West Bank residents and lawyers have long complained about the status of West Bank courts, which operate under Jordanian law, the legal code in force at the time of Israeli occupation in 1967. Corruption has been known to be widespread in the West Bank courts for several years but no action was ever taken against the Israeli-appointed judges.

Ghuzlan also demanded local lawyers be given a role in selecting judges to fill newly vacant positions.

Direct Israeli intervention in the West Bank legal system began in 1967, when the Israeli authorities issued an order abolishing the West Bank High Court based in Jerusalem. Since 1967 the Israeli military authorities have been appointing judges and stopping many civil cases under claims of "security."

In recent years, the Israeli authorities issued a number of military orders further restricting the jurisdiction of West Bank courts. Among the orders, No. 1060 specifically prohibits West Bank courts from registering land. Instead a special committee appointed by the Israeli occupation authorities was assigned to carry out registration.

Members of the Jordanian Bar Association and sitting judges declared a work strike after the Israeli occupation in 1967 to protest changes in the court system. Over 200 West Bank lawyers are still on strike. An equal number are working.

Prisoners' Families Hold Rally

More than 300 Palestinians, most of them relatives of striking political prisoners, joined in a rally in front of the International Red Cross offices in East Jerusalem March 25 to protest the Israeli prison authorities' refusal to meet the strikers' demands. More than 400 political prisoners in Asqalan prison have been on hunger strike for the past six weeks, demanding an improvement in general conditions, especially medical care, water supplies, and prison guards' behaviour. The rally took place in front of the Red Cross building, closed down last week on the pretext that a women's sit-in for prisoners was obstructing their work.

Sheikh Sa'ad al-Din al-Alami, head of the Higher Islamic Council, opened the rally with a chant for Palestine. He told the crowd of mostly women that the only "crime" these political prisoners had committed was wanting their people and country to live in peace and freedom. He also called on the Israelis to listen to prisoners' demands and improve conditions inside. Alami said it was the right of political prisoners under international law to live in dignity and to receive proper treatment.

Several mothers of prisoners also delivered speeches detailing the sufferings of their sons in the prison. Their emotional speeches described how their sons are being subjected to gradual death, day after day, as a result of the inhumane conditions in the facility. Some criticised the Red Cross administration for closing down their offices after they had decided to extend their sit-in to a day-long one. Prisoners' families who have been holding a sit-in continuously for more than one month decided last week to remain at the Red Cross offices all day long.

The crowd also listened to solidarity speeches delivered by the head of the Painters Union in Jerusalem, the deputy head of

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Asqalan prisoners' relatives participate in a conference March 25 at the Jerusalem Red Cross Office in which they discuss the worsening prison situation facing their sons./AQ photo.

Unions' Headquarters Vandalised

Vandals broke into the professional unions headquarters in the northern Jerusalem suburb of Beit Hanina March 25. They destroyed numerous files and documents, damaged doors and photocopy machines, and stole over JD1500 from the building safe.

Union officials blame Israeli police for not providing adequate security for the headquarters. This is the first time such vandalism of union property has taken place. The headquarters houses the Lawyers, Doctors, Dentists, Pharmacists, Engineers, and Agricultural Engineers Unions.

Dr Salah Bustami, head of the West Bank Doctors Union, whose offices were the worst hit, suspects that the break-in is politically motivated to "incite people against one another," he said. He called the vandals "terrorists and extremists whose interest lies in disrupting internal Palestinian affairs at this crucial stage."

The Israeli police discovered the break-in several hours after it is believed to have taken place. Khalil Farres, the administrative secretary, told *Al Fajr* that the police were in the building as employees arrived for work at 8:00 am. They believe the break-in took place shortly

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Israelis Take Steps to Preempt Land Day Protest

Israeli border patrol units stepped up their activities throughout the occupied territories last week in anticipation of widespread protest action on Land Day March 30. They set up roadblocks on main roads as part of several preventive measures to suppress protest activities. They arrested scores of youths in Qalqilya and took stiff measures to put down a demonstration in Jenin.

Large numbers of Israeli border police used tear gas March 26 to disperse student demonstrators in Jenin and arrested two. Students from Hittin Secondary School held the demonstration in response to the pre-Land Day arrests. Israel Radio alleged that the students pelted army vehicles with stones.

Youths in Nablus hurled stones at passing Israeli cars near the Bracha settlement north of the city, smashing several windshields. Israeli troops sealed off the area and searched for stone-throwers. No arrests were reported.

Border police have set up daily roadblocks since March 26 on the Ramallah-Jerusalem highway, the Nablus highway, and outside Bethlehem University. Police delayed traffic for hours as they searched Palestinian commuters thoroughly.

The roads leading to Bethlehem University, where students had a large celebration for Land Day March 25, were sealed off with roadblocks and only students carrying proper identification were allowed on campus.

Elsewhere in the West Bank, the Israeli military governor of Jericho met with the director of UNRWA and *mukhtars* of neighbouring refugee camps and told them to take measures to prevent possible confrontations between local residents and military troops on Land Day. The military administration also ordered the closure of all government-run schools on March 30 and 31 to preempt student protest activities.

In Qalqilya, south of Tulkarm, Israeli soldiers rounded up scores of young Palestinians throughout the week in an oper-

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High Court Puts Hold on Gaza Deportation

The Israeli High Court in West Jerusalem issued an order *nisi* March 22 prohibiting Israeli military authorities from deporting Nahedah Abdullah from her husband's Gaza home.

Abdullah, a Palestinian from Gaza, left the country for Egypt several years ago and obtained Egyptian residency. In 1981 she married Ahmad al-Gharbawi, a Gaza resident, and returned to their occupied home on a three-month temporary visitor's permit. She applied for permanent residency from the military occupation authorities on the grounds of a family reunion with her husband, but received no word from the military.

Abdullah, who has been leaving and returning to Gaza every three months to renew her visitor's permit, says she filed five applications (the last one March 7) for family reunion status with the Gaza military governorate and was never given a reply. The governorate attorney general turned down a petition filed on her behalf asking for a renewal of her entry permit and instead began deportation procedures against her. Lawyer Felicia Langer then filed the appeal with the High Court demanding an end to the deportation scheme.

In addition to the court's stay of deportation proceedings against Abdullah, the judges required the Gaza military governor to appear before them and explain his refusal of Abdullah's family reunion request. The deportation has been stopped until the three-judge panel hears the case and gives its verdict.

The family of Abdullah, a mother of two, says it is now especially difficult for her to return to Egypt because Egypt recently revoked her residency on the grounds that she should reside with her husband, at his home.

Sources in Langer's office said they had had a similar case in the past when Israeli authorities refused to approve family reunion petitions. The lawyer said it was not until she applied to the Israeli High Court that the military governorate approved the request.

5 Hebron City Employees Fired

The Israeli military authorities fired five Hebron municipality employees March 23 on the pretext that "staff layoffs were needed to improve the functioning of the municipality," *Al Fajr* was told. The five employees, some of whom have been with the municipality for 25 years, are Hammad Jaber, Rawhi Sultan, Na'man Da'na, Barakat Ja'bari, and Yousef Bader.

The Israeli mayor of Hebron, Zamir Shemesh, told *Al Fajr* that the firings were "part of normal procedures." He said that if "a worker is not needed, he will be fired." He said that the municipality is not, however, having financial difficulties.

Jaber, an employee with the municipality's electricity department for 25 years, told *Al Fajr* his letter of dismissal did not specify reasons for the sudden firing, which takes effect April 1. Jaber, the father of 13, said he was dismayed and angered at the municipality action. He said he will hire a lawyer to make sure he is fully compensated for his years of service.

Only one of the five employees — Rawhi Sultan — had reached retirement age and will receive pension pay. The other four have no clue as to why they were dismissed. They all agree, however, that the dismissal was not merely part of municipality procedures. They explained, "We all had a lot of work left to do." They added, "If the municipality was run by a local person rather than an Israeli citizen, we would not have been dismissed."

Mustafa Natshe, the elected acting mayor of Hebron who was fired by the military in 1982, would not comment on the firing, claiming he did not have "all the facts."

The last municipal elections in the West Bank occurred in 1976, although Jordanian law specifies elections should occur every four years. A number of military orders have amended this law. In 1982 the Arab mayors of most of the West Bank and Gaza municipalities were fired. The Gaza Strip has not had municipal elections since 1967.

Rooms in the homes of Ahmad Shehadeh and Issa Ahmad in the Kalandia refugee camp were sealed by the Israeli army March 26. Israel Radio reported that the two, who had been arrested over six weeks ago, are charged with having killed a collaborator.

Arab Lawyers' Union Meets US Black Lawyers' Delegation

Representatives of the Arab Lawyers Committee in Jerusalem (ALC) briefed a 13-member delegation from the American National Conference of Black Lawyers (NCBL) March 19 and 23 on the legal situation in the occupied territories.

Lawyer Ali Ghuzlan, spokesperson for the ALC, said the 13 lawyers were here on a fact-finding mission in the West Bank to investigate the legal situation regarding land confiscations, prisons, and the West Bank court system. Ghuzlan, who was among the Arab delegation which met the American lawyers, said they presented their American counterparts with reports on these issues. He said that both sides agreed in principle on an arrangement of mutual cooperation. The NCBL delegation also invited the ALC to send a delegation to attend their next NCBL conference scheduled for next October in Montreal.

The American lawyers left the West Bank March 25 after having visited a number of individuals and area institutions.

Al Fajr Reporter Files Complaint of Police Beating

Al Fajr journalist Mohammed Zahaykah filed an official complaint at the West Jerusalem police station March 25 against several Israeli border guards. Zahaykah, 23, says the police intimidated and beat him without reason in East Jerusalem two days earlier.

Zahaykah, who works as a correspondent for *Al Fajr* Arabic daily, said a number of guards confiscated his ID card on March 23 and led him to their headquarters in the Jewish quarter of the Old City. He said a border guard officer told him to apologise to unit members for laughing when asked to show his ID. But before he had time to apologise, he was taken to a corner and beaten. "They punched me in the face and in the stomach," Zahaykah said. He said the border guards told him he should not object when they ask for his ID card. They also threatened that they were capable of killing him without anyone finding out.

Zahaykah claims he did not refuse to present his ID when asked to do so. He said the border guards were sitting overlooking Damascus Gate and chatting with a woman. Suddenly, he said, two of them approached him and asked to see his ID. He gave it to them, but one of them demanded to know why he was laughing. "It was clear they intended to intimidate me," he explained. He says he told the guards he was not laughing and mildly rebuked them for being antagonistic towards him. The two soldiers then asked him to raise his arms for a body search when one of them hit him in the face.

Zahaykah, whose news beat is East Jerusalem, said that Israeli border guards frequently harass residents in the same manner but are rarely reprimanded. "It always passes unnoticed, and something must be done about it," he said.

Hadashot Hebrew daily, which also published the story on March 26, said that the Israeli border guards' command considers the incident serious and plans to conduct an investigation. The paper quoted the border guards' spokesperson as saying that they have completed a preliminary inquiry into the incident and will next appoint a special officer to investigate the circumstances surrounding the case.

JEWISH UNDERGROUND SUSPECT TESTIFIES:

"Levinger Sat in on Our Meeting"

Dan Be'eri told Israeli police during his interrogation for involvement in the Jewish terror underground that "Rabbi Moshe Levinger participated in the suspects' [first] meeting about [blowing up] the Dome of the Rock. Levinger said that he would not try to prevent the group from carrying out such an operation although he personally believed that the nation had to be prepared in advance for such a thing."

Be'eri's statement was released for publication by the court on March 26 after Be'eri plea-bargained his way to a reduced sentence. According to Be'eri, "Rabbi Levinger was invited... to give his view on the matter. There was a discussion and a variety of views were expressed regarding the idea — whether the Dome of the Rock should or should not be blown up. Rabbi Levinger expressed the view that the nation had to be prepared in advance and that this could be done by a broad [campaign] of Torah study.

"He did not suggest that we blow up the Dome of the Rock but said he would not take any steps to prevent us from doing so. Yehuda Etzion [another suspect now on trial] said we should draw inspiration not only from Rabbi Kook but also from the poet Uzi Zvi Greenberg. He [Etzion] was totally in favour of blowing up the Dome of the Rock and the meeting ended..."

Be'eri also revealed other previously classified information on the planning of the operation. "The idea crystallised during the final stages of the withdrawal from Sinai. I believed that by blowing up the Dome of the Rock under such circumstances — in which the state was bound to international agreements — the Arabs would feel compelled to cancel the agreement and thus halt the withdrawal."

According to state prosecutor Uzi Hasson, "Blowing up the Temple Mount — a site held to be holy not only by Jews — could have provoked a reaction from the Muslim world which may have escalated beyond what Be'eri claims to condemn — the spilling of blood — to a full scale bloodbath."

According to Be'eri's statement, "[The operation] did not take place because those who were its principal architects were in Yamit at the time and felt that their presence in Yamit would be the decisive influence in halting the withdrawal. After the evacuation from Yamit, I abandoned the whole idea." (Translation: HaAretz, Al Hamishmar, March 27, 1985)

The Dawn

AL FAJR

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March 30

To defend the last bit of agricultural land left them after twenty-eight years of Israeli domination over Palestine, Palestinians declared a strike March 30, 1976 to massively protest an Israeli order to confiscate their land under the policy of Judaising the Galilee. The Zionists who had conquered Palestine by brute force let loose their armed forces to vandalise and crush the movement.

However, Palestinian determination to stay on their land increased. And after the conspicuous Israeli brutality of that day, all the Palestinian people dispersed in the world commemorate their land and homeland on *Yom al-Ard*.

Palestinians have no other land to go to, no other haven, but the land of their fathers and grandfathers. It is their homeland, whether the Israelis and their allies in the world accept it or deny it.

The more pressure the enemies of the Palestinian people use, the more decisive the Palestinians become. As long as the Palestinian people exist, the land will remain theirs and they will defend it, and one day, hopefully in the near future, they will regain it and rebuild it.

On March 30 we celebrate the Day of the Land, to organise our energies of protest and confrontation — past, present, and future.

AL FAJR — Jerusalem Palestinian Weekly

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PLO Washington Spokesperson Clarifies Policy

by Ghassan Bishara
Our Washington, DC Correspondent

The PLO will never surrender its right to represent the Palestinian people, said Hassan Abd al-Rahman, director of the Palestine Information Office (PIO) in Washington, DC. Nor will the PLO accept anything less than an independent state which will later form a confederation with Jordan.

Abd al-Rahman was talking with Arab journalists in his office in Washington, DC and answering their questions about the agreement between the PLO and Jordan, the US stand, and the positions of Arab governments. The agreement, he said, stemmed from the PLO's conviction that due to the nature of Palestinian-Jordanian ties, the PLO must pursue a special kind of relation with Jordan. He said that the presence in Jordan of 1.3 million Palestinians makes such relations imperative to help maintain the Palestinians' identity, along with Jordanian interests.

Abd al-Rahman, who recently spent two weeks in Tunis getting briefed about the agreement by Palestinian leaders, enumerated four "important areas" or countries for Palestinian objectives. The four areas are Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and Egypt; countries from whence all Palestinian activities, both political and military, are to be carried out.

On the Amman Agreement

The Palestinian-Jordanian agreement, Abd al-Rahman said, is important because it meets four Palestinian demands, which both the PLO and Jordan agreed upon and still stand by.

The four main principles are the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, the right of return, the fact that the PLO is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and the notion that the Palestinian-Jordanian agreement is not an axis against any Arab country — on the contrary, it welcomes other Arab countries to join in. Abd al-Rahman said that the agreement, which was concluded between Chairman Arafat and King Hussein on February 11, dictates Palestinian-Jordanian relations and forms a basis for a political solution.

The PIO director stressed the PLO's absolute rejection of any party representing the Palestinian people other than the PLO itself. In response to questions about rumours that several Palestinians have already been selected to do that, he said that no such thing has happened. Asked if the PLO accepts such a proposal in principle and what its response would be if the US posited this as a pre-condition for talks, Rahman stood by his position. "The PLO rejects any pre-conditions either in the delegation of authority to non-PLO Palestinians or in the selection of Palestinian delegates at all." Negotiations, he said, are not to be direct, as the US demands, but within an international conference as called for by the Amman agreement. The PLO, he stressed, "categorically rejects that anybody who is non-PLO may represent the Palestinian people in any negotiations."

PLO Rejects 242...

Abd al-Rahman also clarified a point about UN Security Council Resolution 242, which was mentioned in the Amman agreement. He reaffirmed the PLO stand that the resolution does not address the rights of the Palestinian people, thus rejecting it.

The reference in the Amman agreement to the Security Council resolutions is in particular to resolve the Middle East problem, Rahman said, but not the Palestinian question. Resolution 242, he said, refers to the principle of exchanging Arab land for peace, while it doesn't touch on the Palestinian issue to all. The agreement of February 11, on the other hand, refers to UN General Assembly resolutions that directly answer Palestinian demands, alongside Security Council resolutions. In particular, Abd al-Rahman stressed General Assembly Resolutions 3236 and 181. Resolution 181, for example, deals with the Assembly recommending partition, and 3236 recognises the right of the Palestinian people "to self-determination... to national independence [and] to regain its rights by all means..." The two combined, he said, deal with all aspects of the Arab-Israeli conflict and with the Palestinian question.

Rahman called the American position "hostile and unchanged." He said, "It isn't likely to change without the Arab side defining its interests and being willing to defend those interests." He called the visit of the last two Arab leaders to Washington "less than successful." Neither the Saudi king nor the Egyptian president received what they came for, nor did they make a dent with regard to the Palestinian question. "Our experience with the US has been a difficult one," he said, "and we can't be made to trust US policy." He called the Arab position "weak, especially when it comes to dealing with the US."

Because of Arab weakness and the American hostility to Palestinian rights, Rahman concluded, the PLO must adopt both a political programme and a military programme. He reaffirmed PLO demands as expressed in the document agreed upon in Amman between Chairman Arafat and King Hussein and criticised both the US and the Arab governments.

'Iron Fist' Unites Arab Americans

by Ghassan Bishara

It is not very often that the Arab community in the US unites. When it does, the cause is usually very serious. What has been displayed on American TV every day for about a month now from south Lebanon has unified the Arab community in the US and sparked a number of demonstrations in several American cities, both against the Israeli practices in south Lebanon and against last week's US veto of the Security Council resolution condemning these practices. Mustafa Sa'ad, the target of a January 21 bomb blast believed to have been set off by the Israeli army, addressed a demonstration on Tuesday, March 26 in Washington, DC, his first public appearance since he left the hospital.

Demonstrations organised by an *ad hoc* committee on Lebanon took place March 26 in San Francisco, Houston, New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Boston, and Washington, DC. The Washington, DC demonstration is scheduled for 3:30 pm on the steps of the US capitol. One member of the *ad hoc* committee, Jim Abourezk, national chairperson of ADC and a former US Senator from south Dakota, said in a press release: "We are part of the nation-wide group which has organised to call attention to and protest against the terrorism being conducted against the people of south Lebanon by the Israeli military." Another member of the *ad hoc* committee is the Arab Women's Council. Its president, Hala Maksoud, said: "We are demanding an immediate end to the arbitrary executions, the bulldozing of homes, the killing of civilians, and an immediate and unconditional withdrawal from Lebanese soil."

Another group has been picketing the White House for over a week and plans to

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AL FAJR invites our readers to contribute letters, articles and opinions. Contributions must be signed, but names may be withheld upon request.

Since the Lebanese national resistance against the Israeli occupation forces escalated, inflicting heavy casualties, hundreds of articles have appeared in the Hebrew press about the tenacity of the resistance and Israel's inability to crush it. Below are excerpts from among the plethora of articles about south Lebanon published in the Hebrew press that give concrete, vivid expression to the meaning of the term "iron fist."

Israeli Policy in South Lebanon

"Shoot Anything That Moves"

by Ze'ev Schiff

Southern Lebanon is going up in flames and the Israeli army is in the middle of the blaze. Meanwhile, the politicians are debating how our enemies will react if we speed up the withdrawal... It's less than a month now since the army embarked on its "iron fist" policy; however, it has become obvious that it has not proven itself effective in stemming the guerrilla war being waged against the Israeli forces in Lebanon. Even though the army has shaken off its inertia, the Shi'ites have not stopped attacking Israeli troops. In fact, the casualty rate has been on the rise ever since the army began entering Shi'ite villages: there are guerrilla attacks almost daily. In addition to booby-trapping cars and planting explosive devices at the side of the highways, the Shi'ites and their allies have been attacking the outposts of both the Israeli army and the South Lebanon Army (SLA). Moreover, they are not afraid of staging frontal attacks... (Translation: HaAretz, March 15, 1985)

by Israel Zamir

"If you want to stay alive in Lebanon, you can't take your finger off the trigger for a second... You're in a hostile country and you don't have a clue what you're doing there. The only thing on your mind is how to stay alive." (Translation: Israeli soldier, quoted in Al Hamishmar, March 8, 1985)

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... An Israeli army captain told me: "I gave my men an order to shoot at anything that moves. No ifs, buts, or maybes. That's how we managed to kill four terrorists at the beginning of the week. We told the people in the village not to go out to the highway. When a car came along, we opened fire. At least the men feel safe this way." (Translation: Hadashot, March 15, 1985)

by Rod Nordland

We passed a bullet-riddled old Mercedes; in the ditch next to it lay the body of a farmer named Hassan Skaiky. According to Ahmad, the dead man had ignored an Israeli rule against vehicles occupied by only one person — a precaution against suicide bombings. "They are so scared," Ahmad had said of the Israelis. "They always shoot first."

... I watched as a group of old women gingerly walked toward the Qasmiyeh Bridge. Their arms were loaded with groceries; recently even food trucks have been stopped from entering Tyre, and supplies have grown short. Approaching a sandbagged watchtower, the women begged for permission to cross the bridge. The Israeli guards replied with a burst of automatic rifle fire that sent the Arab women sprawling in the dirt. (Partial reprint: Newsweek, March 18, 1985)

by B. Micha'el

Truly, there are still miracles. Exactly one day after the bombing of the safari truck [on March 10] the army happened upon 34 terrorists in a Shi'ite village. And it so happened that they resisted the army tooth and nail, and the army was forced to kill them — to the last man. Needless to say, the events [in Zrariyeh] were totally unconnected with the events of the previous day. Whoever so much as insinuates that God Almighty did not lead the Israeli army to the terrorists or terms the action a revenge operation that will surely provoke more *kamikaze* attacks deserves to have his tongue cleave to the roof of his mouth. (Translation: HaAretz supplement, March 15, 1985)

by Boaz Evron

I don't understand how the army could have [gone into Zrariyeh], fought a battle against a tough and obstinate enemy, and come out unscathed. Thirty-four men were killed, but no one our side suffered so much as a cut finger. Miracles of this type simply do not take place during combat operations. And when Rabin boasts that "no women or children were killed" I cannot but wonder how a battle can be fought in a populated and built-up area without civilians being hurt — if only by accident. Thus I am quite skeptical about the descriptions I have heard thus far about what happened [in Zrariyeh].

The only thing I am certain about is that the events that have been taking place lately in the villages in the area will serve to provoke hundreds to seek revenge, scores of whom will not be afraid of sacrificing their lives to do so. (Translation: Yediot Aharanot supplement, March 15, 1985).

by B. Micha'el

I heard MK Micha'el Dekel (Likud) say the following: "The state of Israel decided on the 'iron fist' policy in order to protect its soldiers. But we also took account of the possibility that such a policy would incite yet even more attacks on our soldiers."

Hence, according to MK Dekel's reasoning, the "iron fist" policy will protect soldiers from attacks provoked by the "iron fist" policy. Understand?

... Shimon Peres recently said that "the state must protect its soldiers..." That's strange. I always thought that soldiers were supposed to protect the state. Peres went on to say, "The state must protect the soldiers who are protecting it."

Who is protecting whom? If the state is protecting the soldiers, wouldn't it be a good idea if they were released from the army and enlisted into the civil service? Or am I getting mixed up? (Translation: HaAretz, March 15, 1985)

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On Sunday, at 3:30 pm in the afternoon, I was asked if I had heard about what had happened in Lebanon. No, I hadn't heard anything. I made a few phone calls and the information began to spread, like a message beat out on a tom-tom. Yes, there was an attack, and yes, there were casualties. At 5:00 pm I turned on the radio. I literally prayed that they would announce something — but there was nothing about an attack in Lebanon. But when the news report opened with a piece of incidental news, I realised that the families of those soldiers who had been wounded or killed had not yet been notified. I sunk into an easy chair and waited, praying that the telephone wouldn't ring, that the doorbell wouldn't buzz unexpectedly. And then I listened to another news broadcast. And then another. Still nothing. I began to feel butterflies in my stomach, my mouth went dry. The waiting was driving me to my wits' end.

Finally, at midnight I heard a report about what had happened in Lebanon earlier in the day and was able to breathe a sigh of relief after the radio announcer said, "All the families have been informed." I wasn't among them. Thank God.

And then I began listening to the reactions and the prattle about it being a "criminal act" and about "the war against terrorism." And I began to wonder what in the world they were talking about.

The Shi'ites are fighting for the sake of their homeland, employing the only means they have and in keeping with the norms accepted there. If there is someone who shouldn't be there, someone who should have never crossed the border into that country, it is my son. My son who has been made into a "liberator of Lebanon," who was forced to make common cause with the Phalange, who was ordered to "establish a new order in Lebanon." And now hated, isolated, afraid, a live target — he is being forced to remain there for a few months more because of the demagoguery about the "first katyusha rocket" and because of the political wheeling and dealing going on in the government coalition. God forbid that we should upset the Likud. And my son is up in Lebanon while Sharon, Begin, Raful, and all the other ministers that launched this insane adventure are walking around chuckling and giving advice right and left. (Translation: HaAretz, March 12, 1985) ■

Letter to Editor:

To the Editor,

For some months I have been asking myself why the opinion and the statements of Israel's anti-Zionist group *Neturei Karta* are featured so broadly in your paper. I read about weekly meetings between Rabbi Hirsch and you, and the published information about *Neturei Karta* lets them appear a natural ally for the Palestinian people.

In your February 15, 1985 edition Rabbi Hirsch received half a page to spread his word — "desecration of holy sites."

I think you are seriously mistaken if you believe you can find a wide r range of allies among the Jewish people by ignoring the Jewish-Zionist majority and by just relying on dubious splinter groups like Rabbi Hirsch's. The fact that both of you are against Zionism does not help much if it comes to future political plans.

Moreover, since you advocate a democratic Palestinian state, which is not based on religious fanaticism, I really wonder if you would take Islamic fundamentalists who support the juridical system of the *Quran* as seriously as you take Rabbi Hirsch's *Neturei Karta*.

What the Palestinian people badly needs is support from within the Zionist camp because eventually the conflict has to be settled with this overwhelming majority of Israelis. In my opinion, the alliance with *Neturei Karta* is not helping you to reach this goal.

With best regards,

Fridolin Klostermeier
Bremen, West Germany

Neturei Karta Address Needed

Dear Friends,

I have a subscription to *Al Fajr* but I more and more feel the urgent wish to get publications from Neturei Karta. I would be very grateful if you gave me their address. Perhaps they also have followers in West Germany?

I was on the verge of hating Jews, but towards these people I have developed a deep respect and sympathy. I am also certain that they possess valuable information.

I also deeply respect your dedicated work. All best wishes for the future and regards.

Mona al-Choura
Heidelberg, West Germany

Hundreds of Bethlehem merchants held a sit-in in front of the Bethlehem municipality February 18, 1985 to make known their disgruntlement with rate hikes and restrictions for the new market./AO photo.

Bethlehem Merchants At Odds With Mayor Over Market Tax

by Maher Abukhater

A change in municipal regulations regarding the old market area adopted by Bethlehem's Arab city council early this February set off a war between the council, particularly its mayor and the city's merchants.

The new regulations included three critical points: 1) Trucks of produce that used to drive through Bethlehem's old city streets in order to get to the old marketplace, the bazaar, will no longer be allowed in. Instead, the trucks will have to go to a new market recently opened on the outskirts of the city to be weighed and unloaded. The produce will then be re-loaded on smaller vans that may carry no more than one ton at a time to the bazaar. 2) When the produce is weighed, the merchants will have to pay a four percent tax on every truckload they bring into the city. The municipality claims that this regulation has been in force since 1966, when Jordan controlled the West Bank. The merchants currently pay two Jordanian piasters for a box of produce about 10 kilogrammes. 3) Merchants in the bazaar will have to pay, retroactive to January 1, 1985, JD90 a year for every square metre of space they occupy. The municipality got an approval for this fee from the Israel military, making it a law.

The city's merchants rejected the new regulations outright, protesting that they are intended to drive them out of the bazaar and force them to use the new market area. Spearheading this protest is Mohammed Alqam, a small entrepreneur in the city whose family owns several stores in the bazaar area.

"(Bethlehem Mayor Elias) Freij wants to empty the old market and give the business to the new market at the expense of the small merchants," said Khader Hussein Ali, a vegetable merchant. "If he cares for our interests he would cancel these new regulations," Ali protested. "The new taxes are only a pressure policy to get all the merchants out of the old market and into the new market," added Mousa Alqam, brother of Mohammed.

The controversy started last August when construction on the new market was finished. For several years, the Bethlehem municipality has been interested in building a new central market for the city and neighbouring areas that would sell vegetables and other goods at wholesale prices. It sought out land for the project, and located a lot near Dheisheh refugee camp, about seven kilometres from Bethlehem's central district. Known as Jebel (Mount) Morier, the land has a total area of 92 dunums. It is "absentee property" which has changed hands under four different governments that ruled the West Bank, beginning with the Ottomans through the Israelis.

In 1979, the municipality leased 49 dunums of Jebel Morier from the Israeli military government. The lease is good for 49 years, after which the land and any construction on it will become the property of the authority in charge of the country unless both parties renegotiate the terms when the contract comes up for renewal.

Soon after the municipality leased the lot, it began constructing the new central market. By the time the project was completed last August, it had cost JD587,000 (about US$1.5 million) — much more than originally planned. Bethlehem Mayor Elias Freij, who was particularly keen on the expansion, approved it without consulting the municipal council. He even sought outside financial aid to help defray the high expenses. The central market was originally planned to be for wholesalers only. It was intended to reduce the pressure on the old bazaar area. The narrow roads leading to the bazaar have proven extremely hazardous, particularly when cluttered with the big trucks wholesalers use. The new market would provide a safer place for wholesalers to sell produce to retailers who would then transport it in smaller vans to the old market.

The plans, however, changed over time. When the construction was completed, the market had space for several wholesale and retail shops. A public meeting to auction off the space was held last August. The merchants, some of whom already run shops in the old bazaar, wanted to expand their business and figured they could take good advantage of the new central market. During the bidding, the merchants got into a serious confrontation with Freij when they found out that rent was set at JD3000 a year. The clash became so intense that a fist fight almost broke out between the bidders and the municipality members. They all walked out, claiming they did not want to hurt the small retailers at the bazaar by taking business away from them. However, the walkout was mainly a scheme to pressure Freij to lower the rent.

Freij later reduced the rent by almost half for some of the smaller shops, but he left the big ones at JD3000. He also gave merchants who rented shops in the new market certain privileges, including exempting them from paying the four percent tax until business at the central market improves.

So began the war between Freij and the merchants. When Freij began putting pressure on the vegetable merchants with the new regulations Mohammed Alqam, who ran unsuccessfully for a municipal seat in the 1976 Bethlehem elections, and other merchants began to organise their opposition. The merchants complained about the new regulations and demanded that they be cancelled. They accused Freij of not caring for the city's welfare. If merchants have to pay the extra fees and taxes, they said, the price of goods would skyrocket and city residents would be the ones to pay the price. Freij denied to *Al Fajr* that this will result. He said merchants of the old market had a "monopoly on prices." Meanwhile, Freij added, "prices at the new market are 50 percent less than the old market."

The merchants also accused Freij of trying to undermine the small farmers who bring their loads to the old market very early in the morning and sell almost everything by 9:00 am. When Freij banned trucks from entering the new market area unless they had paid the four perent tax, the small farmers found it impossible to be through with selling their crops by 9:00 am. Merchants said that Freij wants the small farmers to sell their crops to wholesalers rather than take them to the bazaar. This way, he thought he could resolve the overcrowding of small vegetable stands in the bazaar. The small farmers believe Freij wants to get rid of them in order to reduce competition with the new central market.

In order to prevent farmers who have not paid the four percent tax from entering the bazaar, the municipality set up a roadblock at Madbasseh, the main entrance to the market area. Three guards were stationed there to prevent any truck from entering without a permit affirming payment of the tax and weight of produce notexceeding the one-ton limit.

Alqam and other merchants were able to stir up the smaller merchants and farmers against Freij and his city council. On February 18, following unsuccesful attempts to get Freij to cancel the regulations, several merchants demonstrated early that morning at the roadblock, demanding its removal. Later that day, a delegation representing the merchants met the Israeli deputy to the military governor of the Bethlehem area and handed him their list of demands.

On the same day around 3:00 pm, close to 300 merchants held a protest demonstration in front of the Bethlehem city hall at Manger Square. The merchants insisted that more than 3000 protesters were present, but eyewitnesses said many of the people present were only observers watching the demonstration. During the demonstration, the Bethlehem area military governor showed up, reportedly after Freij called him. The governor met with Freij and then with Alqam and other merchants at a restaurant in the municipal building.

Alqam told *Al Fajr* that the military governor informed them that the new regulations had been approved by *the West Bank Israeli military headquarters* at Beit El in Ramallah and were therefore binding. The military governor was only concerned with ending the demonstration and did not promise the merchants anything, he said.

That same evening the Bethlehem city council met to discuss the issue and took some decisions regarding the conflict. The council decided to suspend the new fee for occupying space in the old bazaar until the mayor could study the issue further. They also resolved to open the roadblock for trucks carrying more than one ton only during late night hours, providing they have paid the four percent tax. These decisions pleased the merchants since many of them had no real complaint against the small tax but rather with the high annual rents and weight restrictions.

The conflict appeared to have been resolved, at least temporarily, until the city council could study the issue with the merchants. However, unexpected developments complicated it further. The day after the demonstration, Freij and his council members charged that certain "agitators" who "had no business being with the merchants" were behind the trouble. Freij accused these people of cheering the Israeli military governor and prime minister while denouncing his Palestinian municipal council. Sources told *Al Fajr* that it was the interference of the military governor which led the council to hold off on some of its new regulations.

Even though none of the merchants present at the demonstrations acknowledged that such cheers in support of the Israelis were expressed, Freij and other bystanders insisted that they were. Israel TV reported on the demonstration that evening and on the cheers for the Israeli governor. Jordan TV also picked up the story and backed Freij, who has

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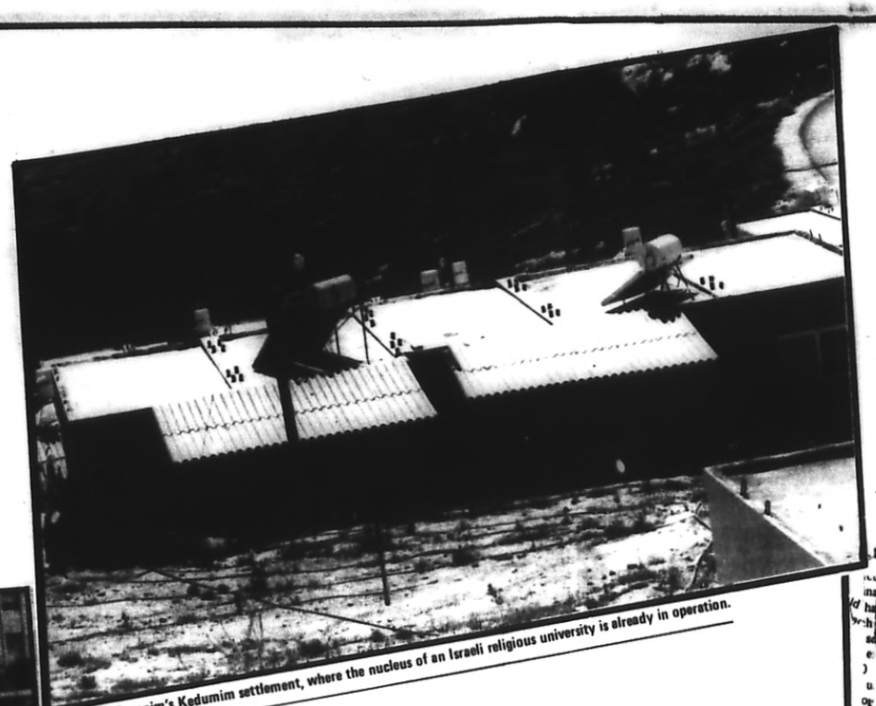
Gush Emunim's Drive for Annexation



The Gush Emunim's Kedumim settlement, where the nucleus of an Israeli religious university is already in operation.

Over the past few years, the one-hundred-and-some-odd Jewish settlements on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip have been busy establishing an institutional infrastructure that superficially resembles some joint ventures and cooperative projects inside the "green line" [Israel's pre-1967 border]. The settlers have set up regional councils, economic concerns, a regional defence network, and their own educational system. They also have a coordinating committee, known as the YESHA Council [YESHA being the Hebrew acronym for [West Bank] and Gaza]. However, the organisational network being built up by Gush Emunim in the occupied territories is very different from similar networks inside the green line in that it is geared to a single political objective, namely, the obstruction of any attempt to come to a territorial compromise or relinquish any land on the West Bank or in the Gaza Strip.

My intention in the following article is to adumbrate the power base that is being established in the occupied territories by Gush Emunim. Although there are certain similarities between the organisational and institutional network the settlers are building and the institutional infrastructure established in Israel prior to its independence (insofar as they both include social, organisational, economic, educational and paramilitary components), the former is not being set up to serve as a launching pad for an independent state but rather in order to establish an ideologically motivated infrastructure capable of forcing the state of Israel into annexing the occupied territories.

In the Event of a 'Debacle'...

Eight years ago, during a meeting of the Gush Emunim executive, Hanan Porat proposed turning Kfar Etzion into "a base for operations in the event of a debacle." At the time, Gush Emunim had marshalled a few thousand religious youths in support of Jewish settlements on the West Bank. Today, in light of the plethora of settlements that have sprouted up throughout the occupied territories, one cannot but admit that the Gush has come a long way. And it has done so without deviating from its original objective: to check any "possibility of a debacle" — a debacle being understood as any sign of the state's willingness to reach some sort of territorial compromise or withdraw from the occupied territories.

I do not mean to imply that the entire settler network is nothing more than a clandestine underground organisation waiting to be activated if circumstances so conspire. However, it certainly can be viewed as an organisational framework that will use all the means at its disposal in order to prevent such an eventuality from arising.

Attorney Elyakim Ha'etzni of Kiryat Arba stands out as perhaps the loudest of the more obstreperous Gush Emunim spokespersons. He recently published a series of articles in *Nekuda* [the settlers' journal] about what the settlers should, can and must do in the event of a "debacle." On the eve of the last national elections, he wrote: "Were the state of Israel to relinquish Israeli sovereignty over [the West Bank], it could do so in name only. For the Jews in [the West Bank] and Gaza would not feel bound by such a decision." He went on to ask "whether in such circumstances we ought to take the law into our own hands?" and called on his readers to "prepare for the future" (*Nekuda*, No 75). In another article, written after the general elections, he lashed out against "assimilationist Jews" who had jumped on the Palestinian bandwagon — an omen, he wrote, that could portend civil war (*Nekuda*, No 82).

Civil War Imminent?

Many people dismiss Ha'etzni as a crank, the author of bombastic articles that bear titles such as, *Even Now a Civil War Could Break Out!* But he is far from being alone in hinting at such a possibility (although his statements are usually more hysterical than most of his Gush Emunim cronies). One is driven to draw the following conclusion: Whoever is anxious about such a turn of events or anticipates civil war must prepare for such an eventuality. Needless to say, that is not tantamount to claiming that the whole settler network is being built up solely for that purpose; perhaps even the opposite is true. The settlers have put a lot of effort into foisting their programme and political aspirations on the public without recourse to violence. But when it comes to their chances of succeeding, well, that is an entirely different matter.

The operation carried out by the settlers a few weeks ago — when they closed 30 West Bank traffic arteries in protest against the government — is just one small example of their organisational capabilities. All of the newspapers cited the "military discipline" and "sophisticated methods" of the settlers. Within a few hours, between 600 (according to *Davar*) and 1000 (according to the Gush Emunim spokesperson) settlers, in some 300 private cars, divided into cells and equipped with walkie-talkies, brought West Bank traffic to a standstill. A small example of their organisational potential, and yet, one must take care not to blow things out of proportion.

Weapons are a prominent feature of settler "civilian" life, as this Kiryat Arba women ostentatiously exhibits.

Government Silence is Tacit Support

Be that as it may, the fact that there was no official response to the Gush's action is cause enough for legitimate and profound concern. The police did not arrest a single person, although the law was clearly being broken. No one was interrogated, no one was even issued a warning. What better evidence could there be of the political power the settler institutions have accumulated in their drive to coerce the state of Israel into accepting their ideology?

The settlers want a civil guard of their own in order to consolidate the semi-autonomous infrastructure they have carved out for themselves on the West Bank.

The regional councils of the Gush Emunim settlers are dynamic institutions that bear scant resemblance to their counterparts in Israel. In only a few years' time, they have managed to establish social and economic structures, transportation, health and educational networks, and a variety of organisational frameworks that reach from the north [West Bank] to the south of Gaza Strip. In addition to the regional councils of [West Bank], Binyamin district, Etzion, Hkr Hevron, and the Gaza Coast, there are also local councils in Kiryat Arba, Ariel, and Elkana; they employ hundreds of people and have both capital and technical resources at their disposal.

Superficially, there may not be much difference between Gush Emunim institutions and their counterparts inside the green line, but on closer examination it soon becomes apparent that the differences are great and far-reaching. First of all, regarding their rate of growth and development, I have my doubts as to whether any regional council in the entire state of Israel can chalk up the kind of achievements that the Binyamin Regional Council (in the Ramallah area) has accomplished in so short a time. The Binyamin Region has an impressive and spacious office building, a development company, educational and cultural institutions, a fleet of new buses (that are contracted out for transport work all over the country) and more. Last year the council published a brochure on regional development in the Binyamin region that calls for settling 200,000 Jews in the ara. (The brochure almost totally ignores the Arabs living in the Ramallah area.)

One of their most glowing achievements is the "Company for the Development of 'Samaria.'" Within three years since its establishment, the company acquired a fleet of buses, trucks, heavy machinery, pick-up trucks and minibuses. The company is now branching out into spadework operations and, together with the Histadrut-owned "Stone and Lime Company," is establishing a cement factory. There is also a joint venture with Paz for opening a factory to produce petroleum-based products such as paint, glue, etc. The directors of the company are proud of what they have accomplished, for they are now capable of establishing new settlements on their own, without any government assistance. They have acquired a great deal of experience in road-building and in all facets of the construction industry; the directors of the company are already hinting at their intention of expanding the company into an economic empire, capable of operating in an autonomous fashion if political problems arise.

State in the Making

While kibbutz and moshav movements and regional councils inside the green line also have social and economic networks, there is a major difference between them and the Gush Emunim network on the West Bank, for the latter's self-proclaimed *raison d'etre* is to consolidate an autonomous infrastructure that does not have to depend on the good will of the government. In short, their goal is to accumulate more and more power and thereby force the state into accepting the political programme of the settlers.

It would seem that the settlers on the West Bank have embarked on a programme akin to the project of the Zionist movement prior to the establishment of the state of Israel, namely, laying the foundations for a state-to-be. The regional councils exploit their prerogative over issues of planning and construction; they control a number of economic and service networks; and they coordinate their activities through the offices of the Council of Jewish Settlement in [the West Bank] and Gaza (YESHA), whose political clout should not be underestimated.

The August 1984 charter of YESHA Council states that the council will work to extend Israeli sovereignty over the occupied territories with all the means at its disposal. There is a political committee, a finance committee, a legal committee, a settlement committee, an information committee, and a defence committee. Indeed, the YESHA committees resemble a kind of shadow cabinet, delegated with the role of representing and consolidating the political and institutional infrastructure of the Gush Emunim settlers.

It's worth pointing out that thousands of other Israelis living in the occupied territories are not affiliated to the YESHA councils as they do not share YESHA's political objectives. The settlements in the Jordan Valley (the majority of which are affiliated to the Labour Alignment) are not members of YESHA; nor are the residents of Ma'ale Aduimim or the "five-minutes from Kfar Saba" residential quarters. The ultra-Orthodox Emanuel settlement is also not a member of YESHA, which all-in-all only represents about one-half of all the Israelis living on the West Bank.

The Gush Emunim settler network is not bereft of information and propaganda networks. It has field schools, religious academies, and even the nucleus of a university in Kedumim. A rabbinical court operating under the auspices of the Binyamin Council was recently set up to deal with financial suits — according to *Halacha* [Jewish religious law]. (One must not overlook the overriding importance religion plays in the political lives of the settlers.)

Danny Rubenstein of the Hebrew daily *Davar* describes the wide-ranging political and economic infrastructure the Israeli settlers on the West Bank have carefully built up. Its *raison d'etre* is to guarantee that the West Bank and Gaza remain a permanent and integral part of the state of Israel.

An arsenal of weapons confiscated from settlers in the Jewish terror underground that had planned to blow up al-Aqsa Mosque.

Halacha Dictates Relations With State

Hence we are drawn to the major question: How will these networks react if they clash with the authority of the state? Ever since the Jewish underground (composed of Gush Emunim settlers) was uncovered last April, there has been a debate raging in all the settler publications between the supporters and the opponents of the underground. Although the debate is far from new, it only became public in the aftermath of the arrest of the underground suspects. Put simply, it revolves around the following question: When is it permissable and when are we obliged to oppose the legal government of the state of Israel? For the settlers, being Orthodox Jews, the theological dimension is primary: What does the *halacha* allow and what does it forbid regarding our relations with the state of Israel — a state that includes a multitude of secular institutions?

Whoever does not share their beliefs will find the arguments somewhat baffling. But one thing is beyond doubt: a large and powerful group of settlers have stablished religious-*halachic* legitimacy for opposing — by whatever means possible — any Israeli move to reach a solution by way of territorial compromise on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip. Others have found national and political justifications for violent resistance to such an eventuality, and all the settler institutions and networks are united behind the political objective of working for the total annexation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Demographic Dilemma

After having established an organisational and institutional network on the West Bank, the settlers still faced a major obstacle. In spite of an array of settlements, financial institutions and a political executive (the YESHA council), their problem has always been what to do with the close to a million-and-a-half Arabs living in the occupied territories. Despite all they have achieved, the settlers represent no more than three percent of the population of the occupied territories. They can step up their acquisition of land on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip, they can improve their legal standing as the lords of the realm, and they can attract more Israelis to their settlements, but, given the demographic superiority of the Arabs, they have little chance of achieving their main objective. Kiryat Arba, for instance, has been in existence for 15 years and has developed into a community of between 3000 and 4000 people. Yet, juxtaposed with the 150,000 residents of Hebron, it appears a trifling achievement.

Hence the settlers' recent demand that the government adopt a harsher policy in the occupied territories. Although there have always been stone-throwing incidents on the West Bank, not to speak of terrorist attacks, the Israeli security forces have always been able to keep things pretty much under control. But now the settlers are trying to exploit such incidents in order to force the government to adopt measures that will make the Arabs start thinking about emigrating. That's the reason they are demanding closer supervision and control of the Arabic press, the closure of the Arab universities, and legislation that would make stone-throwing a terrorist offence; they have called for introducing capital punishment for terrorist offences, dismantling refugee camps and dispersing their residents.

But that's not all. The settlers also want to be allowed to set up a "civil guard" that will function as a semi-autonomous police force. (The settlers say that they only want a civil guard that will operate in the same manner as the Tel Aviv civil guard.) The former army chief-of-staff, Rafael Eitan, helped the settlers set up a regional defence network in which the do their reserve service.

Many people raised their eyebrows at Eitan's scheme and criticised it, claiming that the settlers would take advantage of it. And they have been proven right in their warnings. Among the Gush Emunim underground suspects now standing trial in Jerusalem is a top army officer — Captain Yehoshua Ben Sasson — who was a regional defence commander. Other suspects also had ties with the regional defence programme.

The settlers want a civil guard of their own in order to consolidate the semi-autonomous infrastructure they have carved out for themselves on the West Bank. In other words: the settlers have almost everything they need to operate independently in their backyard. They have the service network of the regional councils, and now they want another military framework to help them achieve their goal of being the arbitrators of policy in the occupied territories.

Poised for a Fight

I don't know whether Gush Emunim settlers are presently engaged in planning a clandestine militia to oppose any possibility of an Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank, although a quick perusal of the charge sheet on the settler underground places such a hypothesis within the bounds of possibility.

In the meantime, the settlers have been employing more sophisticated tactics. They are building an infrastructure that they hope will rule out any option save that of annexation. If they can, they will avoid anything that smacks of a "private militia." Their achievements thus far have been impressive, and even one of their staunchest opponents, Dr Meron Benvenisti, has come to the conclusion that, given the present situation on the West Bank, the wheel cannot be turned back. Many Israelis may wake up one morning to find the settlers' network mobilised against the state of Israel if the option of territorial compromise in exchange for a political agreement ever comes up.

At present, the YESHA council is trying to present the advocates of territorial compromise with a repugnant choice between two equally disastrous alternatives: Either annex the occupied territories and oppress the Arab population, or agree to face the consequences of what may escalate into civil war. The network established by the settlers is thus holding a knife at the state's throat and turning us into hostages. While it is not an armed underground, it is an effective network capable of forcing the state of Israel into making Israeli rule over the West Bank and Gaza Strip (and the hundreds of thousands of Palestinian Arabs living there) a permanent fixture. (Translation: Davar, February 10, 11, 12, 1985) ■

Hadas Lahav and **Michal Schwartz** of the Hebrew monthly *Derech HaNitzotz* interviewed Zahira Kamal, outspoken Palestinian nationalist and leader in the women's movement. Kamal relates her struggle against town arrest and the more positive aspect of her courageous work with the women of the occupied territories.

One Valiant Woman

Zahira Kamal is the secretary-general of the Women's Work Committee — the largest women's organisation in the occupied territories. She has a BA in physics and an MA in education. She also works as a teacher, is a leading member of the Society for the Preservation of the Family, and is active in the UNRWA School Teachers' Association. The range of her activities appears even more astounding in light of the fact that she is prohibited from leaving Jerusalem [except to teach in Tireh, outside Ramallah — ed] and that she must remain within the four walls of her home between sundown and sunrise. And what's more, she's been living that way for the past five years! — a record of sorts, even by West Bank standards.

Her struggle against the Israeli authorities began in 1967, when in the aftermath of the war she tried to return home from Cairo where she had been studying physics. She was granted permission to return as a *summer visitor* rather than as a *resident*, and her resolve to remain in Jerusalem — the city of her birth — resulted in her being made subject to a foreign travel ban that was not lifted until 1972. After obtaining an MA in education in Amman, she embarked on a teaching career, but she was not destined to have an easy time.

Sadat's 1978 visit to Israel and the unveiling of the autonomy plan precipitated a wave of mass protest throughout the occupied territories. Zahira was arrested and held in administrative detention for six months, two of which were spent in the Russian Compound lock-up in Jerusalem and the other four in Neve Tertza prison.

Democracy — Israeli Style

"Insofar as I'm a resident of Jerusalem — which has been annexed to the state of Israel — I ought to have the same rights as any Israeli citizen," Zahira said with a smile. "My trial was held in a civil court in order to make it appear democratic, but actually the whole thing was a farce. My trial was held *in camera*, I didn't have a suitable translator, and neither I nor my lawyer were able to attend a number of sessions; the civil court judge approved the extension of my detention time after time. I call it 'democracy Israeli style.' " After the High Court of Justice agreed to review the case, Zahira was released a day before her hearing, on December 12, 1979.

She was charged with incitement and membership in a terrorist organisation. "Of course I denied the charges," she said. "As regards my personal beliefs, I didn't deny that I recognise the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of my people and that it is my universally recognised right to fight for my people's right to self-determination, independence, and return to their land. I also explained that, being a teacher, I could not condone a situation in which schools and educational institutions can be arbitrarily shut down for six months. But beyond that, I said my opinions were my own concern and it was ridiculous to claim I had incited the residents of the West Bank; they acted on their own

Zahira Kamal

volition. If the authorities want to snuff out the ideals I stand for, they will have to arrest all the residents of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip."

Over 100 letters from various organisations and international figures — ranging from the Red Cross and Amnesty International to a variety of women's and teacher's organisations — poured into Zahira's home, informing her of the steps being taken to secure her release.

But her troubles with the police were not over. Five months after her release, she was served with an order restricting her movements — and it is still in force! At first she was put under town arrest, and thus prevented from teaching in Ramallah. "For 45 days I taught physics by correspondence until the pressure exerted by UNRWA and the public bore fruit and I was granted special permission to travel to the school in Ramallah and back on the condition that I signed in at the police station before leaving Jerusalem and upon my return. I'm put through an ordeal at the station twice a day and I spend every night under house arrest."

Police Nightmares

"But the authorities did not succeed in isolating me. The people at work and the men and women I meet all believe in the same things I believe in. However, my social life has suffered. People don't like coming around to a house the police feel free to enter at any time of the day or night.

"Rather than go out to the movies or the theatre and leave me by myself, the members of my family have taken it upon themselves to share my house arrest. The worst thing is when the door bell rings in the middle of the night and it's the police — coming to check up on me. And it hasn't been going on for only a year or two, I've been living this way for the past *five* years. It's a nightmare! Sometimes I dream the police are ringing the doorbell and I race to the door only to find no one there. I often think that it's a pity they aren't there after all so I could get the whole thing over and done with."

Our conversation assumed a brighter tone when Zahira began telling me about her work in the Women's Work Committee. On March 8, 1978 — International Women's Day — a number of women who believed in the necessity of changing the status of Palestinian women founded the committee. The traditional women's organisations on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip that had been active prior to the occupation were basically involved in charity work and ignored the struggle for social change. Moreover, they weren't prepared to embark on any new activities outside the field of philanthropy.

Women's Issues Top Priority

"We wanted to change the situation whereby women are prevented from studying, working, developing their consciousness, and taking part in the national struggle of our people. We also tried to learn from the experience of

> *"Our aim is to make women independent and to teach them to stand up for their rights."*

Algerian women who participated in their people's national struggle, believing that national liberation would automatically bring about the emancipation of women. But it didn't happen that way; in fact their situation deteriorated after independence. Therefore we are not prepared to relegate to the sidelines issues related to improving the status of women; we consider it to be at the heart of our activities, for only thus can women gain a foothold in the struggle for national and social liberation.

"Our objective is to establish a mass women's movement that will include women from villages, refugee camps, and cities. We've mapped out a political and social programme that views the struggle of Palestinian women as an integral part of our people's right to self-determination, an independent state, and the opportunity to return home.

"You will understand the difficulties we faced if I tell you that at the outset we had to invite men to give us lectures on the social conditions of Palestinian women. But we quickly established ourselves and have set up branches in many villages and refugee camps. We work like ants, going from door to door in order to reach everybody; we also approach women who worship at the mosques. Our struggle is not directed against Islam; Islam grants women the right to financial independence and promises fathers who send their daughters to school a reward in the next life. Khadija — Mohammed's first wife — was a merchant and a wealthy woman in her own right. His second wife, Aisha, was a revolutionary who led her army to victory.

"However, there are many fathers who send their daughters to school for only five or six years and many who marry them off without their daughters' consent. This phenomenon is especially widespread in the Ramallah area, where many of the residents have American citizenship and the chance to marry one's daughter off to an American passport-holder is considered a golden opportunity."

"We Persuade the Whole Family"

"We do not call on women to rebel against the authority of their fathers or brothers, for although rebellion may solve certain individual problems, it alone cannot bring about social change in the status of women. We believe in trying to persuade the whole household. When we visit a woman's home, we speak to all the members of her family. If a young woman comes up against maternal opposition or if a husband opposes his wife's participation in some of our activities, we try to persuade them that no one's reputation will be tarnished by being involved in our organisation. A lot of men who opposed our work at first have become our most ardent supporters, and some even give us financial support.

"In order to allow mothers to be something more than housewives, we set up 15 nursery schools for children between the ages of three and five, and four day-care centres for infants. The children get one hot meal a day, immunisation, medical and dental check-ups, and of course the benefit of our educational programme. We have 890 children enrolled in our nurseries. Every day two mothers put in a day's volunteer work, and that's how we keep in contact with them. We also hold lectures for mothers on various topics, such as health and hygiene, education, and women and their social role. Our nursery schools provide women with an opportunity to go out to work and also act to cement our bonds. When an epidemic breaks out, we examine and treat all the children in the affected area, not only the children in our nurseries."

Financial Independence Paramount

"We place a great deal of importance on freeing women from their financial dependence on their husbands or UNRWA and work to help free them of their refugee mentality. We have a committee that trains women for jobs — traditional jobs for the most part, since they demand only a minimal investment (for a sewing machine, loom, etc) — and we are thereby keeping our traditional handicraft industry alive. When a woman completes one of our training courses, she can apply for a job in one of our workshops or in a private factory. Our labour committee tries to prevent lay-offs for reasons of birth or pregnancy and upholds women's right to earn a decent wage by maintaining contacts with employers and relevant institutions. Once a year we hold a bazaar and sell all sorts of useful items at a uniform price; we believe that everyone should donate something.

"Our aim is to make women independent and to teach them to stand up for their rights. We have a committee for combating price increases that buys

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Palestine and Culture

Culture News

by Said al-Ghazali

EVENTS

Literary Festival

Students of Hebron University held a literary symposium February 25 where six students won first and second class prizes in the categories of short story, essay, and poetry. Four teachers in the Arabic department judged the students' work and commented on the students' style.

Zuhair Anati, one of the festival judges, told *Al Fajr* the students wrote on personal, national, and religious topics. "Their style," he said, "is still mediocre. However, we looked at their writing as beginners." The other judges were Yasir Abu Elian, Dr Abd al-Rahman Abbas, and Adnan Othman. The second literary festival will be held in June.

El-Hakawati in Europe

Members of *El-Hakawati* Theatre troupe left Jerusalem March 7 for France to participate in an international festival there. *El-Hakawati* performed *Ali the Galilean* on the main stage of Lyons at a festival March 13.

The troupe returned to Jerusalem March 17 to continue showing their new play *From the Source to Sorrow*. In May and June the troupe is expected to embark on a comprehensive European tour to include Germany, England, France, Holland, and Scandinavian countries.

A Film on Islamic Monuments

Dozens of Palestinian figures watched a video film on Palestinian Islamic monuments at the folk centre in Taibeh in the Triangle district. The scenario was written by Fathi Fourani, head of the Haifa-based Islamic Committee on the Defence of Islamic Monuments. It was produced by Nathem Sheraidi. The film, which lasted for 80 minutes, focused on aesthetic aspects of the Islamic monuments and the negligence of them by Israeli authorities.

The books recently published in the occupied territories are an authentic reflection of Palestinian cultural life and an important means to maintain the existence of Palestinian culture under occupation. They cover various topics, including literature, social stratification, and culture.

The banning of hundreds of volumes in 1976 caused a serious cultural setback. The publishing houses stopped printing books as a result of financial losses from unsold or confiscated books. However, some printing houses, clubs, and universities are now exerting efforts to revive publishing in the occupied territories. The following is a short preview of some books that have recently come out hot off the Palestinian press.

Birth and Childhood in Palestinian Culture and Society

by Dr Sharif Kana'aneh, Abd al-Aziz Abu Hadba, Omar Hamdan, Nabil Alqam, and Walid Rabei
published by the Family Rehabilitation Society
Al-Bireh, January 1985

This 471-page volume describes popular local customs and Palestinian folklore about pregnancy, birth, and childhood from an anthropological perspective.

Classes in Arab Countries

by Dr Iyad Barghouthi
published by the Arab Research Centre
Jerusalem, February 1985

Classes in Arab Countries deals with the social infrastructure in Arab society. It divides the Arab nation into five classes: the bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie, intelligentsia and students, peasants, and workers. In the introduction, the Arab Research Centre commented that the book discusses a very important subject and paves the way for a scientific dialogue between intellectuals on the subject of class divisions. The author made use of 90 reference works in Arabic, Russian, and English.

Lexicon on the Geography of Palestine

by Qustandi Niqola Abu Hamoud
published by the Arab Research Centre
Jerusalem, October 1984

This first lexicon of Palestinian geography gives information about 1500 towns, villages, and hamlets in Palestine. The locations' names are arranged in alphabetical order. The book includes a detailed map and brief descriptive information about each area. Some photographs are also included in the book.

This lexicon is part of a long-term project which aims at documenting all towns and villages in Palestine. The book includes blank sheets for researchers to write notes. All names of Israeli settlements before 1949 are mentioned. Qustandi Niqola refers to the publication as "a very important documentary lexicon which can be used by researchers and students. It revives names of the destroyed villages and prevents any distortion of names. It helps to locate positions on maps." The author used nine reference books as well as maps and publications of survey departments in Jordan and the West Bank.

Unemployment Among Graduates in the West Bank and Gaza Strip

by Ihsan Atiyeh and Samir Jibril
published by the Arab Union of Graduates
Jerusalem, 1985

The Arab Union of Graduates, established in Jerusalem in 1966 for promoting social and cultural activities among university graduates, published this year a book entitled *Unemployment Among Graduates in the West Bank and Gaza Strip*. The book, which was supervised by Ihsan Atiyeh and prepared by Samir Jibril, provides 49 different tables on the issue of graduate unemployment in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The tables are classified in accordance to: name of university, college, or vocational centre; sex; name of district; year of graduation; degree; and age of graduate. The Arab Union of Graduates began registering names of unemployed graduates in April 1983. The number of unemployed graduates who have diplomas and BA degrees reached 2150 by the end of 1983. No exact figures on unemployed graduates for 1984 are known.

Settler Practices in the Occupied Territories

edited by Ihsan Atiyeh
published by the Arab Union of Graduates
Jerusalem, October 1984

The Arab Union of Graduates also issued a book entitled *Settler Practices in the Occupied Territories*. The book gives information on Jewish extremist movements and figures. It deals with settler attacks on Palestinians and sheds light on relations between settlers and the Israeli government. One chapter of the book deals with legal aspects concerning settler violations of law and another section comments on the report submitted by advocate Yehudit Karp regarding the legal offences committed by settlers against inhabitants of the occupied territories.

Najah Journal of Research

published by the Centre for Documentation and Research
Najah National University
Nablus, December 1984

The second issue of the semi-annual *Najah Journal of Research* was published at the end of last year. The journal, which aims to encourage the publication of scientific research at Najah National University and all universities in the occupied territories, includes research in humanities and social sciences. Natural sciences research will be published in a separate issue in June. Nadim Rouhana, acting director of the Centre for Documentation and Research, wrote in his editorial that the journal has already played a role in giving local researchers new opportunities to publish their work and in encouraging scholarly interaction between them.

The issue includes nine articles in Arabic and English on literature, history, economy, culture, and politics.

Al Fajr al-Adabi

edited by Ali Khalili
published by Al Fajr *newspaper*
Jerusalem, March 1985

The March issue of *Al Fajr al-Adabi* literary magazine (No 54) came out this month. Excerpts from the autobiography of the poetess Fadwa Touqan, which had been previously published in Arab literary magazines, are reprinted. The issue also includes: a short story and a poem written by a Palestinian militant, "Awad," who was hanged during the British mandatory period; a study about the function of the concrete image in pre-Islamic Arab poetry written by Dr Abd al-Mon'em Rajab; and various poems and short stories by local writers.

Mu'in Bseiso

edited by Yaqoub Hijazi
published by Alaswar Publishing House
Acre, spring 1985

Alaswar Publishing House in Acre has issued within its spring 1985 programme of publication and distribution a book entitled *Mu'in Bseiso*. Bseiso, a well-known Palestinian poet who died in London in January 1983, is the subject of this collection of essays and anecdotes about his life and his national and literary contributions. Contributors to the anthology are well-known Palestinian political and literary figures including Mahmoud Darwish, Samih al-Qassem, Yahya Yakhluf, Bassam Abu Sharif, Iz al-Din Manasra, Ali Dayoub, Shaker Samawi, Salem Jubran, Munther Amer, Nazeh Abu Nidal, Shawqi Omari, and Ali Ashour.

Kamal Nasser

by Mohammad Hamadeh
published by Alaswar Publishing House
Acre, spring 1985

The book *Kamal Nasser* is about the prominent Palestinian poet and PLO leader who was assassinated by Israeli agents along with two other leaders — Kamal Adwan and Abu Yousef Najjar — in Beirut in April 1973. The book deals with Nasser's life in his native village Bir Zeit, his wanderings in the Arab world, his political ideas, and his poetry. It also gives details of commando operations in Lebanon.

Farewell War, Farewell Peace

by Mahmoud Darwish
reprinted by Alaswar Publishing House
Acre, spring 1985

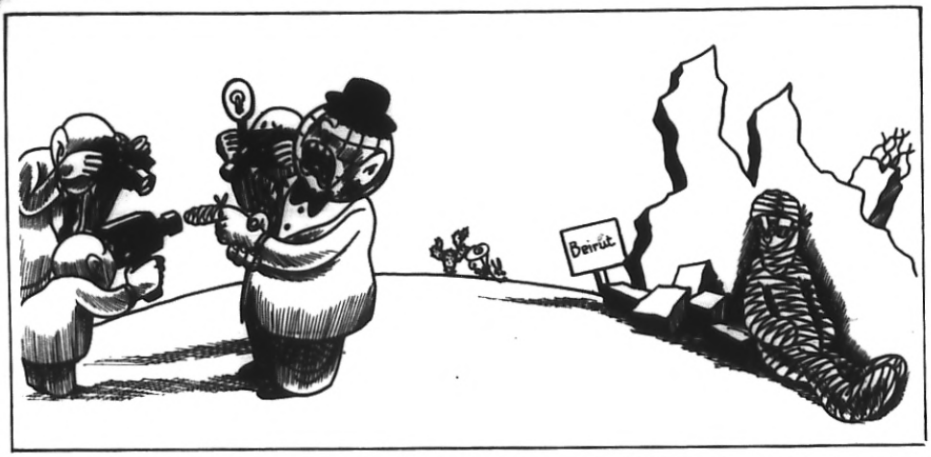
Farewell War, Farewell Peace, written by the most prominent Palestinian poet, Mahmoud Darwish, was first published in Beirut in 1974. Darwish wrote this book shortly before and after the 1973 war. Darwish dedicated his book to the martyrs and Arab fighters.

Three Distinguished Names in the Palestinian Novel: Ghassan Kanafani, Emil Habibi and Jabra Ibrahim Jabra

by Farouq Wadi
published by Alaswar Publishing House
Acre, spring 1985

The fourth book published by Alaswar is *Three Distinguished Names in the Palestinian Novel: Ghassan Kanafani, Emil Habibi and Jabra Ibrahim Jabra*. The author, Farouq Wadi, includes an introduction on the history of the Palestinian novel and notes that the real beginning of the Palestinian novel is 1948. The author writes in his introduction that the study of these three is a very important prelude to an understanding of the Palestinian novel. ■

WINDOW ON THE ARAB PRESS



New developments on the Palestinian front, the continued sit-in protest in solidarity with striking Palestinian prisoners, and the situation in south Lebanon were the main stories in the local press this week.

On the Palestinian front, all papers featured the news of the formation of the National Salvation Front in Damascus. Except for *Al Mithaq*, all local Arabic papers denounced the front and wrote that it would weaken the PLO and reduce its representativeness.

The sit-in protest at the Jerusalem offices of the Red Cross in solidarity with Asqalan prisoners' one-month-old hunger strike was covered with news and photos.

Palestinian papers reported in detail on the Israeli army's continuing search-and-destroy raids in south Lebanon and on the persistance of the Lebanese resistance.

The Only Option

The "Steadfastness and Confrontation" Front that emerged after Camp David could do nothing regarding a real steadfast and confronting stand. It has confined its task to bilateral relations among the states comprising the front.

At present the front seems to endeavour to revive itself, with Damascus as its base, to oppose the current political moves. Since these moves are connected with the Palestinian-Jordanian agreement and are based on the Arab political move which envisages the need for an Arab summit to bolster that agreement, we realise that the revival of the old front signals the start of another battle waged by the Syrian and Libyan regimes against the independent Palestinian decision and against the principle of Arab solidarity aiming at putting an end to the Iran-Iraq war.

The front, which was born under the slogan of "steadfastness and confrontation," is being revived under another slogan that is, "anti-steadfastness and anti-confrontation."

Supporting Iran in its war against Iraq has nothing to do with Arab steadfastness. So is striking the PLO and its legitimate leadership. The splitting of Arab ranks is also far from being the right approach.

We hoped that the front would be revived under the slogan of support for Palestinian legitimacy, enhancing the Palestinian-Jordanian accord, and backing Iraq in its call for an end to the Gulf war. We also hoped that it would realise the importance of Egypt's return to the Arab fold.

We shall continue to cherish this hope despite all obtacles.

AL FAJR
March 21

Negotiations... and Pre-Conditions

The peaceful Arab moves based on the Jordanian-Palestinian accord are facing a stage of ambiguity because of the contradictory Israeli and American attitudes toward these moves.

While Arab moves are coherent and coordinated because they are based on solid foundations aiming at definite goals to meet Palestinian aspirations, attitudes on the other side are fluctuating and volatile because they seek to maintain the *status quo* as long as possible.

Reports clearly show that the US is far from being indifferent to the Middle East problem, especially the aspects raised by Egyptian President Mubarak during his visit to Washington.

The suggestion made by the Egyptian president regarding the formation of a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation to visit Washington was taken seriously by the US, which conveyed it to Israel for consideration.

But the declared Israeli positions, whether those of Labour or Likud, are still far from a real tendency toward peace. For a while they ask for negotiations without pre-conditions; but they have already, through their statements, prepared a long list of conditions before the start of the negotiations.

A fine example of this is Rabin's statement that the Katif area (in the Gaza Strip) is an inseparable part of Israel. So is the statement by Prime Minister Shimon Peres himself, to the effect that the Jordan Valley area cannot be abandoned by Israel.

If we add to these statements the Likud statements, then the question that arises is: Will there be any land left which Israel could trade for peace? If the answer is in the negative, then what issues are to be discussed in the negotiations?

AL QUDS
March 21

The Urgent Task

Reports from Damascus talk about the formation of the "Broad Front" soon. Whatever names and objectives are assigned to this new body, the fact remains that it is in actual fact a dissident body.

Whoever has something to say can do so within the legitimate Palestinian institutions. The masses of our people have rejected those dissidents who receive orders from the Syrian and Libyan regimes. Our people have absolutely rejected the idea of an alternative PLO.

The present stage makes it necessary to rally all energies and Palestinian forces within the framework of the PLO in order to defend the goals of our people to return, self-determination, and the establishment of an independent state. These goals are currently being subjected to a fierce onslaught by the hostile forces.

AL SHA'AB
March 23

Reagan's Heresy - and Insolence

In a press conference, US President Ronald Reagan refused to "blame" Israel for the armed clashes in south Lebanon which resulted in the murder of two CBS correspondents. He clumsily noted that "such things could happen"...!

In the same conference, he also said — and how well he spoke! — that negotiations between his administration and the PLO are unthinkable at all as long as the PLO does not explicitly recognise Israel's right to exist and UN resolution 242. Reagan added falsely: "A great number of Palestinians do not feel the PLO represents them."

What we would like to say about this clumsy US logic is that Reagan is "free" to consider the Israeli army so innocent that it cannot harm even a fly... to say nothing about the CBS employees.

Let's even say that Reagan is "free" to claim that the Israeli army is throwing "sweets" at people in south Lebanon.

But Reagan is not "free" at all to talk heresy as he pleases, and to be so insolent as to claim the PLO does not represent all the Palestinian people.

The big problem lies with some Arab regimes that still allow a person like Reagan to vent his malice against the Palestinian people.

AL FAJR
March 23

The Joint Delegation

We imagine that those who talk about a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation and nominate people for it are living on a planet other than our earth.

They ignore what the Palestinian leadership has declared, that is, its insistence that the only framework for peace in the area is an international conference attended by all concerned parties on an equal footing.

The PLO has defined the framework of an Arab delegation to which it should be a full partner. It has rejected any form of authorisation or delegation, as it had rejected the American plans. The Palestinian explanation contained in the statements of the PLO Executive Committee and the Fatah Central Committee left no room for interpreting the Amman accord at will. Therefore the current talk about the joint delegation is aimed at creating confusion and doubt and spreading illusions about an impending solution at a time when American and Israeli aggression is escalating.

AL SHA'AB
March 25

The False 'Salvation'

At the time when the PLO under the leadership of Yasir Arafat is trying to restore Palestinian unity at all levels, the Syrian regime persists in its anti-PLO efforts harming the Palestinian cause in general. One such attempt by this regime is the repeated declaration of the formation of the so-called 'Broad Front' in Damascus. Having failed in this effort, the Syrian regime resorted to what it termed 'The National Salvation Front' which included the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Palestine Liberation Front, Fatah dissidents, as-Sa'iqa, the Popular Struggle Front and the PFLP—General Command.

It is obvious that the formation of this 'Salvation' was decided upon by the Ba'ath Party is Syria, with the objective of striking Palestinian legitimacy. Yet, the reduction of the 'Broad Front' to a 'Less Broader Front' will bring nothing but failure to Hafez al-Assad. 'Salvation' will also end up in failure.

The refusal of the Democratic Front and the Communist Party to get involved in this 'Salvation' reveals the dimensions of the failure of the Syrian regime at present. This honourable stand by these two organisations is seen as a good step toward reuniting the PLO factions under the legitimate leadership.

AL FAJR
March 26

Tantur Bids Rector Farewell

Donald Nicholl

Over 200 local personalities bid farewell March 14 to Professor Donald Nicholl, rector of the religious Ecumenical Institute at Tantur. He is being replaced by Dr Landrum Bolling, board member of the US-based Foundation for Middle East Peace.

The farewell party for Nicholl was held at the Tantur institute on the Jerusalem-Bethlehem Road and followed a lecture by Reverend Marcus Braybooke on the interfaith dimension as a contributing factor to Christian-Jewish dialogue.

Nicholl, who has held the post longer than any previous rector, is credited with major improvements and changes in the programme of this Christian ecumenical centre. Nicholl initiated the "Christianity in the Holy Land" programme, directed by Dr Jiryis Khoury. He also played an important role in the recent foundation of the Inter-Faith Academy of Peace, headed by Dr William Klasen.

Dr Bolling, who is already the international president of the institute, will be rector on an interim basis. Bolling was president of Earlham College, a Quaker institute in Richmond, Indiana, for 15 years. He has also served as president of the Lilly Endowment and until recently maintained an office in Washington, DC, where he helped direct Tantur's external relations. According to Tantur's winter newsletter, the theme for the 1985-86 academic programme will be "Liberation and Reconciliation."

The Tantur Institute for Ecumenical Studies was established in the aftermath of Vatican II, the conference on doctrine called by Pope Paul VI in 1962.

Resignations Damage Christian Embassy Credibility

The pro-Israeli International Christian Embassy (ICE) suffered a credibility setback this year with the resignation of a senior employee and seven other staff members during the past two months. Cornell Ord Doubi, a retired British army officer who was employed by the embassy to improve relations with the local Christian community, submitted his resignation, to be effective March 25. Neither Doubi nor embassy officials would reveal the reasons behind the resignations, but local Christian leaders believe that the embassy's involvement in politics of late sowed seeds of dissatisfaction among employees.

Doubi, who was the supervisor of the Garden Tomb before he joined the embassy, told *Al Fajr* that he and embassy officials mutually agreed on his resignation. Doubi told a group of local Christians at a prayer breakfast that "seven employees have resigned and two others are planning to resign."

Timothy King, the financial director and board of trustees member for the ICE, told *Al Fajr* that the embassy was grateful for Doubi's contribution and that he hopes "his post will be filled by a qualified individual." Regarding the resignations or planned resignations, King denied that "a mass exodus was taking place" but admitted that there have been "some changes in recent months."

Reverend Odeh Rantisi, head of the Anglican Church in Ramallah and a leading critic of the Christian embassy, told *Al Fajr* that "Christians have no embassy. Our message is that of reconciliation between man and his brother and with God. All efforts not geared for these principles will ultimately fail." Rantisi said that the resignations in the embassy were triggered after recent blatantly political statements and actions by the embassy. He cited a recent decision to finance a settlement in the West Bank as an example of the embassy's political action.

The ICE, whose operating budget in 1984 reached US$700,000, was established in 1980 to "assist Israel" at a time when all were "abandoning" her. The embassy, which has been boycotted by local Christian Arabs, was established shortly after international embassies moved out of Jerusalem in the aftermath of the "Jerusalem Law" in September 1980, which declared the city Israel's eternal capital.

Prisoners

Continued from page 3

one of the two West Bank labour federations, and a number of other unionists and representatives of student councils at the Ibrahimiyeh Community College, the Modern Community College in Ramallah, and al-Uma Community College in Dahyat al-Barid, north of Jerusalem. The conferees received solidarity messages from Palestinian political prisoners in a number of Israeli prisons, who said that they were also on strike in solidarity with striking Asqalan prisoners. Prisoners urged the protestors to continue their efforts to pressure Israeli prison officials to respond to the prisoners' demands.

The more than 400 Asqalan detainees are protesting the authorities' refusal to sit with their representative committee to discuss their complaints, which include a demand to transfer mentally-ill prisoners. Prisoners are reportedly eating only bread and drinking tea. They have also boycotted family visits in order to exert more pressure.

Israeli Police Minister Haim Bar Lev sent a letter two weeks ago to the striking prisoners through the prison warden rejecting the prisoners' demands and asserting that prison conditions are acceptable.

Land Day Protest

Continued from page 3

ation local media termed the "iron fist" for its similarity to Israeli army measures in south Lebanon. Qalqilya has been the scene of frequent confrontations between Israeli soldiers and Palestinian youths, and incidents of stone-throwing. Qalqilya residents have been barred from travelling abroad for several weeks now as a collective punishment for these incidents.

Five Arab students at Beer Sheba University were arrested March 27 as they were distributing leaflets about Land Day. The local police held the students for two hours and confiscated the leaflets, which were printed by the Committee for the Defence of Arab Land. The committee, composed of Palestinians inside the "green line," is the primary organiser of Land Day celebrations.

The committee is organising festivities in three Arab villages on March 30 — Sakhnin, Taibeh, and Rahat. Thousands of Arabs and Jews are expected to attend.

March 29, 31

Drama: *"From the Source to Sorrow,"* presented by El-Hakawati Theatre Troupe at their East Jerusalem theatre. IS2000, 7:00 pm. (Arabic, English translation available)

March 30: Land Day Marches and Meetings

Sakhnin (Galilee): Two marches begin, one in Deir Hanna at 1:30 pm, reaching Arrabeh at 2:00 pm; the second begins in Sakhnin at 2:00 pm. Both meet at the Sakhnin Secondary School at 3:00 pm.

Taibeh (Triangle): March begins from the Kupat Holim clinic at 2:30 pm and moves towards the memorial site, where a meeting begins at 3:00 pm.

Rahat (Naqab): Central meeting in city centre at 3:00 pm.

March 31: Palm Sunday

Procession: Begins from Beit Faji, Mount of Olives, at 2:00 pm, continuing down the mount to St Anne's Church in the Old City. For further information on other services, call the Christian Information Centre, Tel: (02) 287-647.

Vandalism

Continued from page 3

after midnight, Farres said. "They also told us that this will be a difficult case to solve since it was done by professionals," he added. The police were unable to find fingerprints or other evidence that might help uncover the identity of the thieves. Bustami told *Al Fajr* that "if the police were more interested in protecting our property, this regrettable event would not have happened."

Mursi Hajir, head of the West Bank Lawyers Union, told *Al Fajr* that he believed the vandalism was a "premeditated attempt at disturbing the function of the headquarters which was established to serve our national unions." He expressed hope that "the vandals would be caught and the motives beind the break-in publicised."

Iron Fist

Continued from page 5

continue doing so for another week. This group is also a coalition of organisations. "The Coalition of Concerned Americans" and the "Lebanese Arab Coalition" have organised in order "to condemn Israeli massacres of civilians in south Lebanon, to stop all aid to Israel, and to call for an immediate withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon."

Izzat Zein, the spokesperson of the group, lost relatives in the raid on Ma'araka. He said: "The Israeli soldiers who ransacked Ma'araka also stole 14,700 Lebanese pounds from a relative of mine after destroying his household valuables."

The protest against Israel's practices in south Lebanon has once again reactivated the Arab American community, and almost all the Arab organisations here have taken part in sounding their protest. The organisation of Arab American University Graduates (AAUG) sent a telegramme of protest March 22 to Israel's Prime Minister, Shimon Peres, and Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin, "calling on them to order the cessation of the barbaric Israeli 'iron fist' policy in Lebanon," which has resulted in massacres of civilians, journalists, and destruction of property. AAUG also sent a telegramme to US Secretary of State George Shultz and UN Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar urging them to "restrain the Israeli rampage" in south Lebanon.

Tax

continued from page 7

good relations with the Jordanian government, in his fight against the merchants. Jordan accused the merchants of being Israeli agents plotting against a "nationalist" municipality. Sources confirmed to *Al Fajr* that cheers were made and that they came from Alqam. However, Alqam strongly denied that he or anyone else expressed any such sentiment.

The report on Jordan TV outraged the merchants, especially Alqam, who is known to be a strong supporter of Jordan and one of its advocates in the occupied territories. Alqam openly brags of his friendship with top Jordanian intelligence officers. The merchants were worried that Freij had successfully turned their fight from one over rights and their welfare to a national war between "Israel's agents" and a "nationalist municipality." In order to clear his name, Alqam travelled to Jordan February 22. He was later followed by a group of merchants, but the Israeli authorities barred all except one from crossing into Jordan. All Bethlehem residents have been banned for almost a month from travelling to Jordan following a fire bomb attack on an Israeli bus in the city. Alqam is also a Bethlehem resident.

Alqam told *Al Fajr* upon his return from Amman that he discussed the issue with Jordanian officials, whose names he refused to reveal. He said the Jordanians understood the problem and promised to interefere to cancel all the new regulations. He said he is returning home hopeful that Freij will yield to the Jordanian requests and cancel the new regulations. If Freij refuses to cancel them, Alqam said, then the merchants will have to escalate the fight.

Meanwhile, the JD90 per square metre tax continues to be frozen until the Bethlehem municipality and the merchants finish studying the whole issue. The merchants are still obliged, however, to pay the four percent tax on their produce and are allowed to let trucks carrying loads up to four tons enter the old market between 7:00 pm and 6:00 am. ■

WEEKLY REVIEW

March 19, 1985

AL-AM'ARI PROTESTS UNRWA POLICY

RAMALLAH — Residents of al-Am'ari refugee camp staged a sit-in strike outside the UNRWA offices in Ramallah to protest the agency's decision not to provide some of them with their monthly food rations.

March 20, 1985

MI'ARI VISITS BIR ZEIT

MK Mohammed Mi'ari of the Progressive List for Peace yesterday visited Bir Zeit University and expressed his solidarity with the university and its students.

Mi'ari met with several BZU officials who briefed him on the situation at the university following the Israeli order to close the new, main campus for two months.

EXPLOSION WOUNDS 3 ISRAELIS

PETAH TIKVA — Three Israelis were injured when an explosives charge went off in an Israeli Egged bus they were riding on in Petah Tikva, near Tel Aviv, a police spokesperson said.

He said the bomb, placed beneath one of the back seats, caused heavy damage to the bus. Ten Arab residents were detained for questioning.

CURFEW FOLLOWS MOLOTOV

Israeli troops clamped a curfew on Faisal Street in Nablus after a petrol-bomb attack on an Israeli army patrol in the street. Israeli soldiers sealed off the area immediately after the attack and questioned a number of shop-owners in the area.

IMAM RELEASED

GAZA — Israeli officials released Sheikh Fayez al-Aswad, the *Imam* of al-Shama'a mosque in Gaza after he completed a 16-month jail term on security charges.

GAZANS JAILED

GAZA — The Gaza military court sentenced Yunis Mohammed Ali al-Sa'idi to 10 months in prison and 14 months suspended on charges of possessing a bomb.

The court also sentenced Yunis Sa'idi Attallah to six months in prison on charges of joining a Palestinian organisation during the course of his studies. The two are residents of Gaza.

5 YOUTHS RELEASED

NABLUS — Five youths from Nablus who were charged with membership in an illegal organisation were released after completing a six-year prison term. They are: Khaled Hassan al-Bahash, Ramez Mohammed al-Dala, Ahmad Rawhi Shahruri, Jamal Aref al-Asta, and Ahmad Hamdi Einabusi.

March 21, 1985

EGYPT CRACKS DOWN ON PALESTINIAN CAMP

SINAI — Egyptian authorities have arrested scores of young Palestinian men in the last few days in Canada refugee camp, in Sinai, according to reports received from the camp.

The arrests are said to be part of a policy of harassment and political blackmail to force Palestinian residents of the refugee camps to accept Egyptian moves in the political arena.

The Egyptians are also said to be harassing merchants who travel between the Gaza Strip and Canada camp.

UNION MEETING BANNED

Israeli authorities notified the secretary of the Printing Federation, Mahmoud al-Sharbini, that the federation was not allowed to hold an educational celebration in Nablus to mark the occasion of Mothers' Day, March 21. The authorities claimed the celebration was illegal.

7 JERUSALEMITES' DETENTION EXTENDED

The Israeli magistrates court extended the remand of the following: Wa'el Yahya Zaytoun, Nasser Abdullah Samara, Mohammad Ahmad Hammad, and Mohammad Isa Abu Ta'ah. All are charged with membership in an illegal organisation.

The same court also extended the remand of Jamal Abd al-Jawad Zalloum, Mohammed Mousa Awad al-Ju'beh, and Jamal Badr. The first was accused of membership. The others were charged with possessing a firearm.

UNIONISTS ACCUSED OF HANGING PICTURE

TULKARM — Three West Bank unionists have been charged in the Tulkarm military court with possession of a painting called *The Wounded al-Aqsa* in their offices.

Israeli troops stormed the Tulkarm Union headquarters in August 1984 and found the painting on one of the walls. Two months later the authorities summoned unionists Awad Yasin, Faisal al-Hindi and Mahmoud Blidi for a lengthy interrogation. The three were released on IS150,000 bail for each, pending their trial.

NATIONALIST ATTACKS STEPPED UP IN GALILEE

An increase in Palestinian nationalist attacks against Jewish settlers in the Galilee was reported by the Hebrew daily *Ma'ariv*.

The police recently uncovered gangs that stole agricultural tools from the Israeli settlements. The police have also arrested a number of youths for throwing stones at Israeli vehicles and destroying the water pipe feeding into the Gush Tefen settlement.

March 22, 1985

1760 DETAINEES IN ANSAR

BEIRUT — The number of Palestinian and Lebanese detainees held in Ansar detention camp in south Lebanon has risen to 1760, according to the monthly bulletin issued by the International Committee of the Red Cross in Beirut.

RED CROSS CLOSES JERUSALEM OFFICES

The International Committee of the Red Cross has decided to close its offices in East Jerusalem as of March 21 until March 26, informed sources said.

The sources attributed the reason for the closure to the sit-in strike staged by relatives of the Asqalan detainees at the Red Cross offices last March 14. The strike, in support of the detainees who have been on hunger-strike for about a month, hindered the work of the employees, sources said.

FAMILIES MAY VISIT TULKARM PRISON TWICE A MONTH

Relatives of Palestinian political detainees at Tulkarm prison have received permission to visit their imprisoned sons twice instead of once a month, informed sources said. An agreement to this effect had been reached by representatives of the Red Cross and prison officials, the sources said.

TOP: Arab Americans demonstrate in Houston, Texas March 26 against the Israeli "iron fist" policy in south Lebanon (see related story, page 5). BOTTOM: Palestinian mothers hear local speakers March 22 commemorate the occasion of Mother's Day at Ibrahimiyeh College in Jerusalem./AO photo.

March 24, 1985

JENIN DOCTOR JAILED

The Israeli military court in Jenin sentenced doctor 'Ahed Ghaleb Zakarneh of Deir Ghazalah village in the Jenin district to eight months in prison and 44 months suspended on security charges.

4 YOUTHS GET STIFF SENTENCES

HEMAH — Four youths from Hizmah village north of Jerusalem were sentenced by the Ramallah military court to lengthy prison terms on charges of membership, weapons training, and attempting to kill an Israeli soldier and seize his weapon.

Muwafak Sa'id al-Khatib was sentenced to 15 years in prison; Ali Mohammed Kana'an al-Khatib to 13 years in prison; Ali Mohammed Askar al-Khatib to 10 years in prison, and Rashad Abd al-Jabar al-Khatib to 10 years in prison.

TEACHER SACKED

NABLUS — The Israeli military released teacher Abd al-Aziz al-Shunar of Nablus after he served a six-month sentence. He was informed that he had been dismissed from his job as a teacher in a local school.

5 HEBRON MUNICIPALITY EMPLOYEES SACKED

HEBRON — The military-appointed Israeli mayor of Hebron, Zamir Shemesh, has dismissed five Arab municipal employees who have been working for the city for a long period of time.

They are: Rawhi Sultan, Hammad Jaber, Na'man Da'na, and Barakat al-Ja'bari.

CUSTOMS RAID ON OLD CITY

JERUSALEM — Israeli customs officials raided a number of shops in the Old City of Jerusalem, imposing heavy fines on the merchants.

March 25, 1985

2 BZU STUDENTS FREED

BIR ZEIT — Two Bir Zeit University students were released from detention. Mazen Mansour was released after being held for 14 days at al-Fara'a prison and Azmi Abbas was released after two days in detention. The two students were questioned on security charges.

FAMILIES SIT-IN AT RED CROSS

JERUSALEM — Relatives of Palestinian political prisoners who are on hunger strike in Asqalan prison staged a sit-in at the Red Cross offices in East Jerusalem and called on the Israeli authorities to meet the prisoners' demands.

The relatives, who were accompanied by representatives of student unions at West Bank universities, appealed to international bodies to intervene with prison officials to improve conditions of political prisoners.

GAZA LAWYER REMANDED

GAZA — Gaza lawyer Adil Abu Ghali was ordered remanded in police custody for one month by the military court in Gaza. Abu Ghali had been in detention since February 26 for unknown reasons.

TOP: Jerusalem taxi drivers strike at Damascus Gate in protest of high taxes. BOTTOM: Bir Zeit University students hold a conference March 23 commemorating the tenth spring anniversary of the university./AO photo.

March 26, 1985

ISRAELI SURVEYORS STAKE OUT CLAIM

AL-UBEIDIYA — Israeli land surveyors surveyed vast areas of land at al-Ubeidiya village in the Bethlehem district.

A landbroker had sold the land, which is estimated at 6000 dunums, to an Israeli firm.

The landowners had appealed more than 150 times in vain to the Military Objections Committee against what they say is a forged land deal.

SENTENCED FOR '79 BOMB

JERUSALEM — The Israeli military court in Lydda sentenced Imad Taha Namari of Jerusalem to 10 years in jail on charges of membership in an illegal organisation, training in weapons, and planting a bomb in Jerusalem in 1979.

Namari, who worked as a guard at al-Aqsa Mosque, was detained over a year ago.

SHU'FAT RESIDENT JAILED

SHU'FAT — The Israeli military court in Lydda sentenced Mohammed Hussein Hindi of Shu'fat refugee camp north of Jerusalem to six months in prison on security charges. He was detained February 17, 1985.

3 YOUTHS JAILED FOR SECURITY OFFENCES

The Nablus military court sentenced Adnan Afouri to one year in prison and a similar suspended sentence, Riyad Abd al-Ra'uf to 20 months in prison, and Ziad Awartani to 18 months in prison.

The three youths, who are residents of Anabta village in the Tulkarm district, were convicted of membership in an "illegal" organisation.

Valiant Woman

Continued from page 10

products wholesale and sells them at cost in our centres. We also have a network of doctors, pharmacists, lawyers, and other professionals who provide our members with services at reduced rates. We have a refugee camp defence committee which organises women in the camps to stand up for their rights and we have a prisoners' defence committee that tends to the needs of women prisoners — eg, lawyers, money for the canteen, books, or clothes. Of course, we also support them in their demands and in their struggle.

"Our health committee provides courses on first aid and holds public lectures on health and hygiene. Another committee is active in trying to wipe out illiteracy among women who never learned to read or write and women who forgot what they learned. The youth committee takes care of the special needs of young women, which obviously differ from those of mothers and married women. The cultural committee deals with cultural affairs and we also have a *dabkeh* song and dance troupe.

"Our foreign relations committee is in contact with voluntary women's organisations around the world in order to learn from them and to collect funds for our projects. All the hot meals at our nursery schools are funded by a Dutch organisation called NOFAB. Church organisations also donate funds.

"Our achievements were on display on February 22 at the Hakawati Theatre in East Jerusalem. For many of the women who attended, it was the first time they had been to a public meeting in their lives. They overcame their fears of the police cordon around the auditorium and the fact that everyone who attended had to present their ID or be photographed. Without a doubt, many will remember the event for a long time to come."

'No' to Amman Agreement

"On the political front, we appealed to the Executive Committee of the PLO to work for unity, and when the PNC met in Amman we sent them a message demanding that something be done to improve the plight of Palestinians in Jordanian prisons and to safeguard our people's rights in Jordan.

"At present we are upholding our people's rights in the face of the Arafat-Hussein agreement, which we believe ignores them. The basic principle — that the PLO is the sole representative of the Palestinian people — is cast aside as soon as one agrees to a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. Still worse, the principle of 'peace for territories' ignores the fact that the conflict here is not one about borders but rather one that revolves around the necessity of recognising our people's rights. The occupied territories should not be administered by Jordan and I believe that just as the Palestinian masses rejected Resolution 242 in the past, they will also reject this agreement." (Translation: Derech Ha-Nitsots, March 1985.) ■

Salman Salem Arab sits with his cat on the ruins of his demolished home. /JH photo.

"The Land is Like One's Son":

An Old Man and His Tent

by Joost R. Hiltermann

Salman Salem Arab refuses to leave. Resting his old bones in a tent on a wind-swept hill overlooking the road that leads from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, he ponders his peculiar fate. Steadfast as a rock, he has braved the biting winds and icy rain and snowstorms of the past winter, as well as the Israeli settlers who — one morning last August — came and destroyed his house, uprooted most of his trees, and tried to expel him from his land. The predicament of this 82-year-old man sums up much of the pathos of the Palestinian people: pushed off their land by the expanding Israeli settlements and denied access to their traditional source of livelihood — agriculture — the Palestinians have been reduced to refugees in their own country. Yet Salman Salem Arab's response to his misfortunes opens a window of hope for the future — simply because he is refusing to leave.

Salman's troubles began early last August. The rector of the nearby Tantur ecumenical institute reports what he saw when he woke up and drew his bedroom curtains: "Some 600 yards away, across the valley towards the hilltop settlement of Gilo, there was an enormous heap of rubble where previously had stood a two-storey family house. And strewn about the hillside below the house were uprooted olive trees and almond trees from which the family had drawn their living."

It had all happened in a matter of an hour. A group of Israelis had arrived at Salman's home with a bulldozer around 8:00 in the morning and had begun, despite vigorous protests from Salman and one of his sons, to clear out the family's belongings from the house. That done, the bulldozer had set to work, and within half an hour nothing remained of the home Salman had built for himself and his family almost 60 years ago. The men claimed to be acting in accord with the law, as a court had ruled in favour of Salman's eviction a few days earlier. The problem was that although Salman had lived on the land, taken care of it, had planted trees and built a house on it, and, most significantly, had paid all land taxes to successive British, Jordanian, and Israeli rulers, the land never legally belonged to him.

Salman's fate had been sealed 12 years earlier and thousands of miles away, though he himself was not aware of this at the time. In 1973, a motley crew of American citizens gathered at the office of a notary public in Washington, DC to conclude a land sale. Thus a 46-dunum plot of land in Beit Jala changed hands from absentee Lebanese and Palestinian owners, through the mediation of a Palestinian middleman, to an Iranian Jew residing in Los Angeles. Omran Chaoolie, the new owner, began proceedings to evict the Palestinian tenants — Salman and his two sons Mohana and Mahfouz — from the land in the late 1970s. But today, Salman and Mohana are still there, living in a tent provided by the Red Cross, refusing to give in to demands that they consider unjust. "We have been brought up here," exclaims Mohana, a sturdy man in his forties. "My father has spent all his life here and planted the trees. How can he leave? The land is like one's son: it is our flesh and blood. Can a father sell his son?!"

Sitting outside on a couple of chairs they retrieved from the rubble that once was their house, Salman and Mohana survey their meagre belongings: a table, some pots and pans, a few clothes, and a mirror they hung on the outside wall of the adjacent electricity building. A watery sun is breaking through the clouds, marking the end of winter. Salman has spent the last three months lying on a stretcher inside the tent while wind and rain came beating down on the thin canvas. Yet there is no anger in his voice when he recalls the demolition of his house and the uprooting of his trees. Instead there is regret, and a determination to hold onto what is still there.

"I would rather be killed and die than leave from here," he says and his voice bears witness to a strength that belies his physical age. Mohana, who is a tailor and whose equipment was also destroyed by the Israeli bulldozer, speaks with incomprehension of the fate suffered by him and many of his people even as new planeloads of Jewish immigrants land at Tel Aviv airport to fill the growing settlements. "The Falashas have been here for only two months and they get a house," he says, referring to the Ethiopian Jews, many of whom have found temporary accommodation in the Gilo absorption centre, a stone's throw away. "And my house, they destroy! Why?!"

The contours of Gilo loom large over the nearby surroundings. A new Israeli bedroom community, stamped out of the ground in the matter of a few years and now approaching 10,000 units, is taking over more Palestinian land. Gilo is part of an Israeli strategy to make its annexation of Jerusalem in 1967 — an act universally condemned by the international community — an irreversible fact on the ground. Residents of Jerusalem and of the villages Sharafat, Beit Jala, and Beit Safafa have been dispossessed of their land, and have seen their vineyards and fruit trees uprooted, and some of their houses bulldozed out of the way. A variety of methods of land expropriation have been employed by the Israelis to accomplish their aims. But in very few cases did the dispossessed have recourse to the law. And when they did, it was often only to find out that the cards were stacked heavily against them.

In part this is a result of the clash between a rational Western society and its formal ways of organising social life, and more traditional societies where, for example, land ownership is established on the basis of use and is not laid down in written documents. Land disputes consequently often revolve around the claimant's ability to produce evidence of tax payments or summon forth enough witnesses who will testify that the person has actually lived on the land and taken care of it. Especially in Palestine, land is in many cases owned by wealthy merchants and village notables who neither live on their own property nor even set foot on it.

Salman, for example, was the only occupant of a piece of land that legally belonged to a Palestinian whom he had never met. This man sold his property in 1942 — without Salman's foreknowledge but without changing his status as a caretake either — to two other families who shortly thereafter emigrated to the United States. Thus, regardless of the fact that Salman had occupied and planted this piece of land for almost half a century, and despite the fact also that the legal owners had never expressed any interest in their property other than to sell it, the mere transfer of a piece of paper in 1973 denied Salman of the fruits of decades of hard labour and of the rights he accumulated by guarding the land, taking good care of it, and paying all the necessary taxes to boot.

Aware of Salman's rights as a tenant, Chaoolie — the new owner of the 46-dunum plot since 1973 — had the advantage of having enough money to engage powerful lawyers in his effort to evict the Palestinian family by legal means. But interestingly, Chaoolie did not bring his case against Salman but against Salman's son Mahfouz, who is mentally unstable. And the pivot on which Chaoolie's case hinged was not the land he bought in Beit Jala but a house used by Mahfouz in the neighbouring village of Beit Safafa. Armed with documents signed by the *mukhtar* of Beit Safafa and by Mahfouz, Chaoolie's lawyers set out to demonstrate that the Palestinian family had hold no official residence on the Beit Jala land at all, which — it must be remembered — had been bought by a man who himself lives in Los Angeles. Eitan Geva, the Israeli lawyer for Mahfouz and his father, countered by referring to the "statute of limitations," which says that a tenant can no longer be evicted from the land after he has lived on it for 15 years or more. But the Israeli court rejected Geva's argument.

Thus the Palestinian family lost its case and — in the process — its house: the Israeli bulldozer hired by Chaoolie came to do its destructive work even though a permit for demolition had not been issued and while the matter was still being appealed in court. "Israel is not a democracy," Mohana observes wryly. "The Israelis talk peace but they don't like peace and they don't like Arabs. Just look at what they are doing in Lebanon, at Bir Zeit University, and here!" Mohana and his father have received little help from outside, especially not from the Palestinian community.

"The local population, like the social welfare institutions, the municipality, or the voluntary work committees have done nothing for him," says Ibrahim Matar, a Palestinian economist who is one of the few who have interested themselves on Salman's behalf. Mohana knocked on several doors in Bethlehem and Beit Jala to get money to build a small house for his father while continuing his legal battle, thus to put a halt to the expansion of the Gilo settlement. But those with the means to help him turned a deaf ear on his petitions. Jerusalem Mayor Teddy Kollek for his part, however, claims in response to queries from the concerned rector of the neighbouring religious institute of Tantur that his municipality, which has jurisdiction over Gilo, is taking legal action against Chaoolie for the illegal demolition of Salman's house and the illegal uprooting of his trees. But not for taking his land...

It is for this reason that Salman Salem Arab, 82-years-old and ailing, refuses to leave: he does not want to lose the only claim to the land he has left — his own physical presence. An offer by Amir Hashin, the Jerusalem municipality's advisor on Arab affairs, to pay the rent for an apartment for Salman if only he agrees to leave his land, was rejected out-of-hand by the family. They feel that they belong there. Asked to comment on what he as a human being thought of an 82-year-old man living in a tent in the rain and the snow, Chaoolie's lawyer Dan Avi-Itzhak responded that Salman was still there "as a kind of demonstration, in order to extract some money. But it is too late," Avi-Itzhak added, "Now he has lost his opportunity" — a reference to earlier offers of compensation by Chaoolie, which, however, only included the house, not the 60 years of hard physical labour. Salman's lawyer Geva admits that compensation was proposed by Chaoolie, but says: "I understand why Salman and Mohana rejected it. For them there is no other way but to go on." Geva insists that he is not giving up the legal battle because, he says, of the "unique hardship" that Salman and Mohana face.

Thus Salman remains on his land like a true *samed* — no matter how overwhelming the odds or how punishing the adversities — almost single-handedly holding out against the encroaching settlement of Gilo. A young immigrant couple from New York living in an apartment around the corner expressed utter surprise when informed that a Palestinian family was living in a tent a mere hundred metres away. Perhaps it has not been so difficult for these young and middle-income residents of a low-cost Israeli housing project to remain completely oblivious to the presence, virtually at their doorstep, of what must surely be the smallest refugee "camp" in the occupied West Bank... ■